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**The Other Half of the Story:
the Interaction between Indigenous and
Translated Literature for Children in Italy**

by

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Declaration and Published Work

This thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at another university. All references contained within this thesis have been correctly cited, and the original authors acknowledged. Some ideas contained in Chapters 1 and 4 have previously been explored in conference papers;¹ however, for the purpose of this thesis, that work has been expanded and ideas have been developed further.

¹ "Translation Studies and Children's Literature." *Crossing the Disciplines: Exploration at the Interface*. Eds. Cristina Marinetti and Susan Bassnett. Warwick: Warwick Working Paper Series, 2007. 81-91; "Theory and Practice of Translation: the Case of Children's Literature." *Thinking Translation: Perspectives from Within and Without*. Ed. Rebecca Hyde Parker. Florida: Brown Walker Press, 2008. 35-46.

Abstract

This thesis shows to what extent the study of Italian children's literature can benefit from an attentive analysis of the parallel corpus of translated works and of the interaction between the two. The first chapter argues that ignoring translated literature means we are telling only half of the story, since translations have had a strong impact not only on the development, but also on the formation of Italian literature for children. The second chapter disputes the assumed internationalism which suggests children's classics can cross linguistic and cultural boundaries 'naturally', employing research tools offered by Translation Studies: the mechanisms of transfer which can be observed when classics for children move from one culture into another reveal the many changes and adaptations that these books have undergone in order to be accepted in the target cultures, and also their transformation over time within their own source cultures. The third chapter explores links between translation, women's writing and children's literature by looking at the work of a limited number of significant Italian women translators of children's literature, whose contribution to Italian literature is still largely ignored. The historical period of Fascism provides a context for the observation of norms applying to literature for children in the fourth chapter. The idea that children would be much more ideologically pliable than adults led the regime to try to impose on children's books a set of norms conforming to its political aims. Following a broadly chronological line brings us, in the last chapter, to look at the way in which the penetration of innovative literary models and ideas through translation greatly influenced the development of indigenous

children's literature in post-war Italy, as well as at the impact of globalisation from the 1980s onwards, both on Italian production and on imported children's books, their distribution and reception.

Introduction

This thesis examines the interaction between translated and indigenous children's literature in the Italian literary context. The impact that foreign children's books in translation exert on the target context is affected by the agents involved in the production of translations along with the poetics, expectations and norms expressed by the target system. Hence, the present research will explore the relationship between the position that children's literature has occupied within the cultural and historical context of Italy, and the mechanisms of inclusion of translations of children's books within the specific national context of Italian literature in different historical periods.

This exercise will be performed through a study of the functions that translations for children have played in the Italian context. Have translations for children been able, encouraged, or allowed to bring new and innovative elements into the Italian system? Or, conversely, have they been fully assimilated by the poetics of the target culture? Is it possible that both eventualities can coexist? These questions, related to translation processes, necessarily lead the way to a fuller exploration of the kinds of systemic constraints (i.e. literary, pedagogical, ideological, social, and economic norms) that

translations for children have been subjected to, both at a textual and contextual level, as well as of the role played by agents (translators, publishers, literary critics, among others) as actively determining not only the interaction between translated texts for children and Italian original literature, but also the development of indigenous Italian children's literature itself. First, however, the key notions, context and methodological framework of the thesis must be set out.

1. Children's Literature and its Translation

For numerous reasons, children's literature is regarded as a minor and peripheral literary form in many cultures. According to Zohar Shavit, this is due to the fact that the emergence and development of children's literatures have followed common patterns across different countries (*Historical Model* 27). This condition of inferiority derives from the history and tradition of this body of literature, which is strictly bound to those of childhood, representing a minority group that has historically suffered a status of inferiority and subordination to other groups. Thus, the main system of literature tends not to ascribe a high value to literature for children, which is attributed, as a result, the status of a minor subject in literary research.

The most evident repercussion of this peripheral status on the translation of books for children has been identified by many (Shavit, O'Sullivan, among others) in the marked

tendency of translated children's books towards 'acceptability' (Tourney), 'domestication' (Venuti), or, in other words, Schleiermacher's well known principle of 'bringing the author towards the reader' (49). The great freedom allowed to translators and/or editors, and the high degree of rewriting, abridging, adapting and other kinds of intervention that books for children have undergone, seem to derive from the specific attitude adopted towards the genre in the target context; the more this was considered peripheral, marginalised and of little literary merit, the more freedom seemed to be allowed in translating works for children.

Yet, heavy interventions on translated texts for children have been more commonly justified on the grounds of the identity of the intended reader and main addressee of this literature, the child. Interventions of domestication and adaptation have often been presented as necessary in order to meet the pedagogical and educational needs of a readership unable to understand allusions relating to foreign cultures, or to envisage a context too distant from its own. In this kind of view, such distance would create a strong effect of estrangement and would thus prevent children from fully enjoying the reading experience (Klingberg 10).

Held in 1976 in Sweden, the third Symposium of the International Research Society for Children's Literature (IRSCL) represented the first step towards the

acknowledgment of the translation of children's literature as an international field of research. Published two years later, Göte Klingberg and Mary Ørvig's edition of the conference proceedings laid the foundations for the further development of research on the subject.

In the late 1980s, Klingberg, in his *Children's Fiction in the Hands of the Translators*, criticised what he perceived as the most common way to translate books for children. In his view, the main aim of this activity should be that of enriching the reader's knowledge and understanding of foreign cultures. Yet, most translators' interventions on the source texts (what he categorises as 'cultural context adaptations', 'purifications', 'modernizations', 'abridgements' and 'serious mistranslations') hinder that aim. Klingberg suggested that translation strategies which tend to preserve the foreign spirit of the originals should be preferred, so that the child-reader can get acquainted with the country and the culture from where those books come. Through examples of translations from and into English and Swedish he aimed to show how books for children should be translated, evaluating different translational methods and solutions.

While Klingberg's perspective is prescriptive and source-oriented, the one adopted by Israeli scholars such as Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury in their treatment of translations is, on the contrary, descriptive and target-oriented. This school

of thought applied polysystem theory and the concept of norms to literature and its translation. In their view, research on translations should not serve the purpose of measuring the degree of faithfulness and equivalence of the target texts with respect to the source texts, but rather should look at translations as products of the target culture; it must examine their systemic position, looking at their interaction with other elements of the target system and at the constraints to which translations are subjected.

Polysystem theory had a strong impact on research into translation of children's literature, because it elevated a genre regarded as minor to a central object of research. In particular, Itamar Even-Zohar's theory of polysystem allows us to look at the corpus of books for children, both indigenous and translated, as systems that are part of a broader cultural polysystem in which they interact with each other and with other systems, according to different historical and cultural circumstances.

Zohar Shavit (1986) investigated the position of literature for children in the cultural polysystem from a semiotic perspective: '...translation is understood as part of a transfer mechanism – that is, the process by which textual models of one system are transferred to another' (111). Although her examples are drawn from translations of books for children into Hebrew, she believes that some patterns of behaviour are

common to all children's literatures. Thus, for instance, the position occupied by this genre in the literary polysystem is inevitably peripheral, in her view, due to the fact that many societies categorise childhood as a rather inferior status. When looking specifically at translations, Shavit focuses on the transfer of books from the adult to the children's literary system, showing how the analysis of mechanisms of translation reveals characteristics of the target system that otherwise would be difficult to detect. This happens, for instance, because 'translational norms expose more clearly the constraints imposed on a text that enters the children's system' (112).

In the last twenty years, the autonomy of scholarship on the translation of children's literature has increased. New approaches have greatly benefited from other disciplines, such as children's literature studies, comparative literature, or semiotics, in order to explore the interfaces that children's literature in translation has with neighbouring areas. While advocating a proper place for children's literature and its translation amongst the objects of literary research, recent approaches consider it more crucial to stress the distinction between translating for adults and translating for children, and to draw attention to the challenges involved in translating a different genre for a different audience. Riitta Oittinen's research expresses this view by focusing on 'the human action' (3) involved in translating books for children. She explores the

exchange that takes place between the translator and the implied reader (9) as a form of reading and dialoguing that involves both of them. Her work draws on Bakhtin's concept of dialogism, and according to her '...translating for children...should rather be defined in terms of the readers of the translations' (61).² Oittinen's contribution accurately represents the shift from an approach whose only question is about 'how texts are translated' to one where the question of 'why they are treated the way they are' becomes central (74).

In 2004, Oittinen also introduced a special issue of the journal *Meta* entirely devoted to the subject of translating children's literature. In it, Emer O'Sullivan criticises the lack of a proper comparative approach to the study of literature for children and its translation. Ideas such as universal patterns of development shared by children's literatures (expressed by Shavit) have brought about, in O'Sullivan's view, an incorrect representation of culture-specific situations and of the mechanisms behind the international exchange of books for children (52). In this light, recent studies have fruitfully centred on specific national literatures, allowing a more faithful picture of national diversity and mechanisms of transfer to emerge.

² 'Moreover, I prefer to speak of translating for children instead of the translation of children's literature, as translators are always translating for somebody and for some purpose: translators are not just replacing old things with new ones. Translating for children rather refers to translating for a certain audience and respecting this audience through taking the audience's will and abilities into consideration. Here the translator's child image is a crucial factor' (Oittinen 69).

Jan Van Collie and Walter P. Verschueren's collection of essays *Children's Literature in Translation: Challenges and Strategies*, published in 2006, focuses on four general areas that have particularly benefited research on children's literature in translation, namely polysystem theory, the concept of norms, the ideological implications involved in translation, and the image of the child (VI). The issue of ideology, for instance, is related to censorship in Gaby Thomson-Wohlgemuth's contribution. In the context of the East German social system, children's literature and its translation held a prominent position and enjoyed great importance as a central instrument of indoctrination of readers by the communist regime. In Wohlgemuth's research, the exercise of contextualisation helps to dismiss assumptions such as the habitual inferior position of this body of literature in different countries. In the same collection, Marisa Fernández López's work also addresses the issue of censorship and its different forms in the specific context of Franco's Spain.³

As mentioned above, another concept fruitfully applied to research on the translation of children's literature is that of norms. Isabelle Desmidt identifies specific norms that influence the act of translating literature for children, while Tiina Puurtinen employs the idea of 'degree of acceptability', as

³ Her main contribution appears in the most recent collection of papers on the subject, *The Translation of Children's Literature: A Reader*, edited by Gillian Lathey and published in 2006.

derived from Toury, in relation to linguistic and literary norms operating in the target context, offering examples of translations of children's books from English into Finnish.

One of the latest contributions to research in the field, Gillian Lathey's *The Role of Translators in Children's Literature*, also focuses on a specific national literary context. Despite the development of research on the translation of children's literature in the last few decades, she points out how no comprehensive history about the influence that children's books in translation had on English literature for children has been produced to date. She fills this gap by focusing on the impact of translations and their agents on the history of English children's literature and on the translational strategies employed during specific historical periods.

Lathey's research points out the need to look at the current status and history of children's literature, and its translation, as the result of cultural, historical, and national specificities. This is exactly the point of departure of my own research. Before examining my own methodology in more detail, I will therefore devote the next section to the specific national context within which my thesis develops.

2. The Italian Context

Scholars tend to agree that the emergence of Italian literature for children, as the deliberate creation of a corpus of books

addressing children as readers, took place in the second half of the nineteenth century and coincided with the process of unification of the Italian State (Boero and De Luca 3). The education system was responsible for the creation of books for children as didactic tools and even when, at the end of the nineteenth century, an 'entertainment' imperative started to emerge within the genre (i.e. in works such as Collodi's *Il Giannettino* and *Pinocchio*) the pedagogical component remained preponderant and central.

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, publishing initiatives such as magazines for children (*Il Giornale dei Bambini* and *Il Corriere dei Piccoli*, for example) became channels of innovation, giving space to different genres (such as comic strips) and developing further the potential for entertainment in Italian children's literature. Fascism, however, halted this development by attempting to submit literature for children to its own values and pedagogical intents. As a reaction to two decades of Fascism, in the post-war period, Italian children's literature flourished thanks to a general international awakening (the International Board on Books for Young People was founded in 1953) as well as to groundbreaking publishing initiatives and to the contribution of original authors, such as Gianni Rodari, whose works and educational framework fundamentally changed Italian children's literature. Although conservative forces remained very strong,

from the 1980s onwards, considerable changes such as the strengthening of the publishing sector of children's books in a globalised context, and the consequent growth of its market, occurred in the area of children's literature.

As for the development of children's literature in Italy as an academic discipline, it was in the 1960s that the first university course devoted to children's literature and its history was set up. The previous critical tradition, developed in the literary field, nevertheless remained affected for a long time by the views expressed by the most influential Italian philosopher and literary critic of the time, Benedetto Croce, according to whom children's literature cannot be regarded as art because of its pedagogical goals. Only recently has the epistemology of the genre been reconsidered, looking at its pedagogic component as a strength and as a constitutive element of its interdisciplinary character, rather than as an obstacle to the acknowledgement of its literary value. The ongoing discussion about the epistemological content of the discipline among Italian pedagogy scholars has addressed the issue of the definition of children's literature⁴ and, through that, the question of its constituent pedagogical elements.

⁴ The discussion centres on the child as the implied addressee of this literature. In the Italian context, the most common wording is that of "letteratura per l'infanzia". According to Domenico Ferraro, this label also incorporates juvenile literature (5) and is in fact often 'elongated' in "letteratura per l'infanzia e la gioventù". In this case, too, the focus remains on the addressee and on the readers' age. On the other hand, "letteratura giovanile", which is considered by many as a more suitable denomination and is becoming more common in recent times, does not refer to any specific addressee or age group. According to Renata Lollo, the wording

This is a complex debate, which is affected by a wider international discourse. Two main research paths have been proposed by Italian scholars in an attempt to re-evaluate the epistemological content of the subject. The first sees the need to reach a more definite internal organisation of the discipline as a necessary and primary goal; it calls for further investigation of theoretical bases and of central research questions. The second approach focuses on the systematic development and growth of the discipline, based on the exploration of the manifold instances and multidisciplinary potentiality of the genre. The first objective has been supported since the 1970s by the scholar Anna Maria Bernardinis and reaffirmed at the conference *La letteratura per l'infanzia oggi: epistemologia, didattica universitaria e competenze per le professionalità educative*, held at the University of Padova in November 2007. The “scuola padovana”, then, seems to suggest the necessity of a step backwards in order to give the discipline very strong foundations on which to base any further development. The second approach seems intent on reaching the same result, but through a different path. Scholars such as Pino Boero and Carmine De Luca explore the history of Italian children’s literature in the conviction that in order to define the

“letteratura per l’infanzia” implies an ongoing educational process and underscores the passive role of the implied reader: the child is given a literature made especially for her/him by an adult who exerts the authority of the educator. The label “letteratura giovanile”, instead, contemplates a freer choice made by the user, who is not directly identifiable, in this case (Lollo, “La letteratura” 62-3).

nature of an object it is essential to delineate its whole history and complexity (Ascenzi, “Letteratura per l’infanzia allo specchio” 95).

One of the questions I will ask in this thesis is how the status and the position of indigenous children’s literature within the Italian literary system, and associated research in academia, have influenced the way in which foreign works for children have been translated and inscribed within the genre for Italian audiences. In answering this question, I look at the Italian system of children’s literature and at its position within the broader cultural polysystem, as well as at the systemic constraints applying to it, the processes of translation and the agents involved in it.

3. Methodology and Chapter Outline

Generally inscribed within the theoretical framework of polysystem theory, this thesis draws on the concept of translations as products of the historical, socio-pedagogical, and economic norms of the target culture (Toury 29). More specifically, the point of departure of this research is the idea according to which ‘...the behavior of translation of children’s literature is largely determined by the position of children’s literature within the literary polysystem’ (Shavit 112). Hence, I explore the position and status of children’s literature within the Italian literary polysystem to better understand ‘the behaviour’

of translations within this specific national context and their interaction with Italian original literature for children as well as aspects of indigenous children's literature.

To understand the current position and status of Italian children's literature in the Italian polysystem, both as a genre and as an academic discipline, it is necessary to look at its origin and formation as a genre, at its development as an academic field, and at its current status in the publishing market. In order to do that, polysystem theory is a pertinent methodological instrument since it allows us to look at the cultural polysystem as a dynamic entity whose elements continuously change their status and position (Even-Zohar 14). However, a mechanical application of polysystem theory to children's literature and its translation might fail to take into account or help in the decoding of phenomena that result from the specificity of the genre of children's literature and its translation. For example, polysystem theory's strict dichotomies, such as centre/periphery or canonised/non-canonised, risk leaving out many examples of children's literature as a system whose boundaries, as already mentioned above, are not very well defined.⁵ This also happens because children's books can be treated very differently according to the system they are considered part of at a given time and

⁵ In this respect, in Chapter Two, I will use Philippe Codde's revisitation of polysystem theory to look at Even-Zohar's dichotomies from a different perspective.

according to the expectations and norms of that system. For instance, a series like *Harry Potter*, which occupies a central position as a best-seller in the book market, is not considered central or of high literary prestige by the establishments that canonise books in Italy.

With this in mind, in Chapter One, I look at the role played by children's literature both as a genre and as a discipline in the Italian education system (school and university), as well as at its place in the publishing system, in order to understand which systemic constraints and different historical circumstances determine its different positions within different systems. Some circumstances such as the exclusion of children's literature from Italian school programs in 2004, and, on the other hand, the high percentage of translated children's books that flood the Italian publishing market (around 50% of the entire production of children's literature), suggest that this genre assumes different functions according to the different systems it is part of. The peripheral position that children's literature and its translation occupy as a research field in academia seems still to be due to the prevalent didactic interpretation of the genre, which has been a constant feature since its birth in the second half of the nineteenth century. This component has influenced the subsequent critical tradition, bringing about the exclusion of children's literature from the objectives of literary criticism and historiography, and making it,

on the other hand, one of the central research objects of pedagogy and educational sciences and one of the most prolific (and thus central) publishing sectors.

In the attempt to understand ‘the behaviour’ of translations and the modes in which they have interacted with indigenous literature in unified Italy, I focus on two main functions assumed by translations in the target system, namely a conservative function and an innovative one. Children’s books in translation may end up fulfilling a conservative function for different reasons. The source text may be close to the prevalent tendencies of the target system of children’s literature and thus naturally conform to it. Or, the potential innovative component of the source text may be mitigated through translation in order to adapt to the target system. When, translated children’s books are allowed to bring in innovative components such as new literary models and values, they are able to stimulate a change in the target literature for children.

The examples provided in Chapter One have been selected from different historical periods (second half of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, Fascism, the Post War period until today) to look at reasons that have favoured or thwarted one or the other of the roles played by translated books for children within the Italian target system. To what extent have the degree of openness or closure and the norms of the target literary system, as well as

the choices made by agents involved in the translation process, determined the impact of translated children's books on the target system? I attempt to understand to what extent the prevalent didactic and morally conservative character of literature for children produced in Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century influenced the choice of the source texts to be translated and the process of translation. Thus, for instance, if it is expected that some works were selected for their closeness to the didactic intents of the target system, it seems interesting to look at the impact on the Italian system of such an innovative work as *Alice in Wonderland*. The 1908 translation of Lewis Carroll's work has been chosen as an example, to understand what kind of relationship a book that differed to a great extent from the expectations and literary models of the Italian target literature of the time would develop within the indigenous system, and whether this would be a relationship of rupture or affiliation and inclusion within the target tradition.

I also focus on the importation of comic strips in Italy, both at the beginning of the twentieth century and during Fascism, in order to understand how the continuous process of negotiation between innovation and conservatism that characterises the interplay between translated books for children and indigenous ones is influenced by historical and cultural constraints. American comic strips became known in Italy through

magazines for children at the end of the nineteenth century. Although they were adapted to the target literature for children, they still assumed an innovative function in many respects. Fascism, on the other hand, appropriated the genre to its own aims and banned American comic strips as a product of an enemy country.

This observation of the target system and of the interaction between translated books for children and indigenous literature aims to give a more general and introductory outline of the negotiation of innovative and conservative functions assumed by foreign children's literature in Italy from the second half of the nineteenth century until today. The following four chapters focus on specific periods of time and address more specific issues. Translation processes, agents of translation and systemic constraints/norms are treated as the elements that determine the nature of translations, their impact on the target context and the subsequent development of indigenous children's literature.

Thus, for instance, the importance of translation processes in determining the interaction between translations for children and indigenous literature is explored in Chapter Two by focusing on the category of classics for children, both indigenous and translated, and on their transformation through time. Conversely, the role played by agents of translation in this interaction is explored in Chapter Three by investigating the

figures of some Italian women who were educators, original writers and translators of children's literature during the first decades of the twentieth century. The Fascist period represents the historical and cultural context of Chapter Four, which focuses on the role of norms as systemic constraints that greatly influence the interaction between translated children's books and Italian literature for children. A gradual opening of Italian children's literature to innovation and the parallel changes of norms influencing the genre both as an academic discipline and as a sector of the publishing market from the post-war period until today represent the context of Chapter Five, in which the interplay between translations and indigenous books for children is looked at as the result of these considerable transformations.

Additionally, while Chapter One looks at the interaction between Italian literature for children and translated children's books by analysing the functions (conservative or innovative) fulfilled by translations within the target literary system on a more general level, Chapter Two focuses more specifically on translation processes as one of the factors that determine which function translations will perform in the target context. In this respect, the use of the concept of translation as it is employed in this thesis needs to be clarified further. My use of the term translation is based on the etymological origin of the word: 'to carry across'. This does not exclusively apply to the

passage from one cultural and linguistic polysystem into another, but it also indicates transfers occurring from a system into another within the same polysystem (Shavit 111). This concept of translation mainly draws on Shavit's semiotic formulation according to which, for example, a text can be transferred from children's literature to adult literature within the same polysystem (or the other way round), or it can be transposed into another system by changing the medium of transmission; or both conditions can occur at the same time. As a consequence, the range of phenomena and texts that the label 'translation' can include becomes broader.

If the overall aim of this thesis consists in looking at the interaction between translations and indigenous books for children in the Italian context, another important objective is to show how this exercise significantly enriches the understanding of the target indigenous literature and benefits its analysis. I believe that this is possible because many of the mechanisms involved in the process of translation of a text from one cultural-linguistic system into another also take place when this system-transfer takes place within the same polysystem. Thus, for instance, the changes (interventions of adaptation, localisation of place and time, modernisation, abridgement, transmediation, among others) that a book undergoes within its own polysystem in order to be adapted to new expectations (a different medium of transmission or a different audience, for

instance) are the result of processes that are also adopted when a text is transferred between different linguistic and cultural systems.⁶ As a result, attention to the translation of children's books can shed light not only on the system of those books and on its interplay with indigenous literature, but also on the target literature itself. As Shavit claims, studies on translations can reveal so much about the national original production because they '...expose more clearly the constraints imposed on a text that enters the children's system. This is true, because in transferring the text from the source into the target system translators are forced to take into account systemic constraints' (112).

However, the application of such a broad concept of translation risks intensifying the blurring of the distinction between single translation phenomena and texts. Terms such as 're-reading', 'rewriting' (Lefevere 9), or 'adapting' are often used almost interchangeably to indicate different ways of translating children's literature. In the wake of the debate about different forms of translations in children's literature, Riitta Oittinen in particular calls attention to the difficulty of drawing clear-cut distinctions between these terms, since different

⁶ Jakobson's well known categorisation of different types of translations considers forms of translation that take place between different polysystems or within the same one. 'Intralingual translation or *rewording* is the interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language. Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems' (114).

views depend on the standpoint of the observer (80). She states that the degree of 'loyalty' to the original author and to the source text cannot be measured and evaluated only on a textual level and on the basis of the deviations from the words of the original. The activity of translation is, in Oittinen's discussion, regarded as an act of reading in which both the translator and his/her addressee are involved. The dichotomy translation versus adaptation, for instance, begins to appear less necessary when aspects such as the translator's *Weltanschauung* and the dialogue that s/he conducts with her/his own image of the child are taken into consideration. This leads us to consider adaptations as products of translation activity in its broadest and most complete sense, and to include in an analysis different forms of translation. Isabelle Desmidt, for instance, looks at rewriting as a prototypical category whose extremes go from 'copy' ('(re)writing with hardly any changes') to 'adaptation'; according to her 'the difference is only one of degree' (673). These approaches also clear the field of any evaluative judgement about the interventions made while translating, such as how right or wrong, good or bad, it is to adapt the setting of the story, for instance, or the names of the characters. If any evaluation has to be made, it should be made on the basis of the intended goals of those interventions and of the motives behind them.

The concept of translation employed in this thesis allows us to analyse a variety of phenomena and activities performed in order to fulfil different expectations dictated by the target context and determined by the combination of the translation processes applied, the systemic constraints imposed and the agents of translation involved in these activities. The range of case studies selected thus covers foreign books for children imported into the Italian literary system and original Italian texts for children that at some point in the history of children's literature have been translated/rewritten in order to fulfil different expectations.

Focusing on classics for children in the Italian context responds to the need to observe the evolution of children's books through translation. Due to their longevity and mobility across different systems, classics are subject to a constant process of translation/rewriting in order to be adapted to different languages, cultures, poetics, and norms through time and across different systems. Chapter Two, thus, looks at the reasons behind different degrees of transformation of classics as well as at the effects that those changes produce in the interaction between the resulting products and the target system.

In order to engage in the exercise illustrated above, it is necessary to begin by dismissing some of the conventional assumptions about children's literature and its translation. The

idea of the internationalism of classics, according to which classics for children are ‘universal treasures’ able to cross cultural and linguistic boundaries almost ‘naturally’, is based on the idealised image of childhood and children’s literature that was promoted in the first part of the twentieth century. Drawing on Emer O’Sullivan’s argument against this image, this chapter supports the opposite idea, according to which children’s books actually undergo many changes and transformations when they are transferred from one system to another in order to adapt them to the specificities of the new system; the process of transfer does not therefore take place spontaneously.

This thesis aims to show how this holds true, specifically, for the Italian context, in which classics for children, both Italian and translated, have been considerably changed through time in order to adapt to shifts in poetics, socio-economic conditions, and audience expectations, among others. The position of classics for children in the Italian literary system is investigated through the examples of *Pinocchio* and *Cuore*. In particular, Collodi’s work is a very pertinent example for tackling two of the central issues of this chapter: to dismiss the assumed ‘natural’ internationalism of classics for children, and, even more crucially, to show how the same process can take place within the source system itself. As an Italian work for children that was imported to the US at the beginning of the twentieth century, *Pinocchio* underwent a lot of changes and transformations. I

trace which changes have affected the same classic in its own source culture, more than one century after its publication, and whether these changes can be considered as translation phenomena.

Examining the way in which *Pinocchio* was translated for the US market makes it clear that the text was adapted by American translators according to the didactic and moral norms prevailing there in the first decades of the twentieth century. The high degree of adaptation of Collodi's work to meet American expectations is well represented by Disney's filmic version of the novel, which appeared in the 1940s. At the same time, however, a process of rewriting was also taking place in its own source context, Italy, and not long after its original publication in 1883. In this light, it is also pertinent to understand to what extent today's versions of *Pinocchio*, based on its most famous rewritings (Disney's is a case in point), have influenced the work's reception both abroad and in its own source culture. Can it be, for instance, that *Pinocchio* is still read by, and so famous among, Italian children not only thanks to the re-editions of the original text, but also (or mainly) thanks to Disney's adaptation?

These questions lead me, in the second part of Chapter Two, to concentrate on the Italian context to understand not only how foreign classics for children have been retranslated through time to meet different expectations, but also if and how

indigenous classics have reacted to changes that have occurred within their own source polysystem. In particular, for both the categories of foreign and Italian original classics, I focus on shifts taking place in the addressed audience. The phenomenon in which a text is retranslated/rewritten in order to appeal to a different audience within the same linguistic system is usually called crosswriting. Crosswriting takes place when a text addresses different audiences (adults and children, for instance) in the first place, or when a text is rewritten in order to meet the needs of a different audience than the one it was initially targeting.

Some of the strategies employed in retranslating/rewriting a children's classic to appeal to an older audience are illustrated through the examples of different versions of *Cuore* and *Alice in Wonderland*. Moreover, these examples allow us to observe the related phenomenon of intersemiotic translations, in which the medium of transmission also changes; *Cuore* and *Alice* were adapted for the radio and the theatre, respectively.

Chapter Three contributes to the main aim of the thesis, the examination of the interaction between translations for children and indigenous literature, by concentrating on the agents of translation. A focus on the specific category of women translators of children's literature during the historical period from the late nineteenth century to early twentieth

century aims at understanding to what extent the socio-cultural status and conditions of individual translators within a specific national and historical system can affect their translational choices and the impact of their translations on indigenous literature.

The ambivalent impact exerted by women's translations on the target context seems to reflect the ambiguity, struggle and inner conflicts endured by female intellectuals, educators and translators of books for children in Italy during the period under scrutiny. In this chapter, studies on women translators (from Gilbert and Gubar, Simon, Kroha, and Arslan), and women writing in general, offer a valid methodological instrument of interpretation of such a specific context, allowing us to build a contextual framework around the primary texts analysed. More specifically, I have focused my attention on two women and their experience as translators, educators and original writers: Maria Pezzè Pascolato and Camilla Del Soldato. In the preface to her translation of Wilhelm Hauff's tales into Italian, published in 1910, Pascolato remarks on the need to tailor the best Italian cloth around the original German tales in order for their message to be conveyed. Similarly, in her translation into Italian of Edward Lear's *Book of Nonsense*, published in 1908, Camilla Del Soldato does not keep the strict structure of Lear's nonsense poetry. This tendency to make foreign works adhere to indigenous models and to the

prevalent pedagogical ideas of the time, certainly favoured by the inferior position of literature for children in Italy at the time, is also made evident in Pascolato's and Del Soldato's translations. These interventions, however, seem to coexist with an ability to pave the way for the acceptance of innovative genres in Italy, and for the subsequent appreciation of other works that make use of it.

In Chapter Two and Chapter Three, the interaction between indigenous and translated children's literature is explored within the target context by focusing specifically on translation processes and the agents of translation. However, systemic constraints, internal as well as external to the literary system, also play a major role in influencing this interaction. Thus, the impact that translations for children exert on the target context has to be measured not only by comparing translations with their source texts, but also by taking into account the great variety of norms (didactic, ideological, economic) which, in the broader context, are able to direct this interaction. Therefore, in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, the concept of norms, as put forward by Gideon Toury and re-elaborated by Andrew Chesterman with regard to general translations, and by Desmidt, Shavit and Puurtinen in connection with children's literature, is treated as a useful instrument of investigation in analysing the interaction between translations and indigenous literature in the target context.

More specifically, in Chapter Four the investigation of the norms of indigenous and translated children's literature focuses on the historical context of Fascism (1922-1944), a period during which the ideological norms that the regime attempted to impose on Italian children's literature came to coexist or collide with pre-existing norms, and norms imported through translated children's literature. In this context, it is crucial to understand how this exceptional situation impacted on the system of Italian children's literature and its translations.

The methodology employed in this chapter draws on Toury's theory, according to which norms cannot be observed directly but only through their textual and extratextual products (65). The attention paid to these elements allows a process of contextualisation and historicisation to become visible, and therefore provides a more complete picture of the interaction between translated texts for children and indigenous ones. I consider actual translations as well as Italian original books for children as examples of textual elements; coeval manuals of children's literature, reviews and articles from literary journals, translators' statements, public acts, school reforms and political manifestoes published during Fascism are instead analysed as extratextual evidence. Due to the fact that the regime promoted its ideology especially through propaganda, the investigation of extratextual elements can reveal strategies of refusal or affiliation of texts to Fascist expectations.

The central case study of this chapter is of Italian translations of *Bibi*, the series of books for children written by the Danish author Karin Michaëlis in the 1930s. This choice has been dictated by the need to look at texts that conveyed a message and promoted values opposed to those sustained by the regime, and to ask questions such as how this innovative imported product would fit into the set of norms supported by both the Italian pre-existing tradition of children's literature, and the new standards that the regime was trying to impose on literature for children, both indigenous and translated.

By considering two levels of operation of norms, namely the extra-textual and the textual one, I aim to look at how a continuous process of negotiation, clashing or meeting between norms coming from different sources, could influence the importations of translations and their relationship with indigenous literature. I also attempt to measure the impact on translations for children of the norms of the Fascist era by asking to what extent norms promoted by the regime, by means of propaganda, affected the actual translations of the *Bibi* series at that time.

Socio-cultural and economic changes have also brought about important shifts in the norms applying to children's literature, both indigenous and translated, during specific periods of the history of Italy. In Chapter Five, an examination of the Italian context from the post-war period onwards shows,

for instance, how the end of the war and the birth of the Italian Republic fostered great expectations for the future of children and for the role of cultural production aimed at them. The examples selected aim to show how, despite the continued prevailing conservative attitude of Italian children's literature, new channels of interference through translation were opened both by audacious publishing initiatives that promoted the importation of new literary models and values (e.g. Emme) and by unconventional Italian authors (e.g. Gianni Rodari, Bianca Pitzorno) who sensed the need for change and acted as filters through which innovative elements could enter the target system. In doing so, they altered the course of indigenous literature by favouring a change of prevailing norms. For example, the authoritarian relationship between child and adult depicted in most Italian children's books gradually gives way to narratives in which children express their own voice and in which old taboos (excrement, or differences of genre, for instance) are broken. Attention to the channels through which this openness was encouraged, and foreign influences could positively affect national literature, highlights the work of specific publishers and editors who, through forward-looking choices of works to be imported, offered a direct way for new models and ideas to enter the target literature. Moreover, the work of specific original writers becomes an underground vehicle for the import of foreign material. In this context, Even-

Zohar's dichotomy of 'dependent vs. independent systems' (79) and his concept of 'interference' (54) offer a model of the conditions that cause a literary system to open up to external influences and new norms, and of the dynamics set off by a successful process of 'interference'.

In the 1980s, structural changes at production and distribution level in the field of children's books, as well as the globalisation of the book market, created other kinds of interference, and new norms. New forms of interaction between translated and indigenous books for children in Italy have emerged in the last few decades due to the collapse of old constraints, as well as the strengthening and globalisation of the publishing sector of children's books, which also brought about an increase in the number of foreign children's books imported through translation. Whether books for children coming from more powerful literatures are now simply best-selling products, whose predominance and commercial aggressiveness hinder the literary quality and development of weaker indigenous literatures such as the Italian one; or whether the latter has been positively affected by the enlargement of the market at a global level, are matters that are hotly debated in Italy today (Ragusa, Lazzarato, Denti, Blezza, Bartolini and Pontegobbi, among others).

In order to explore this issue, I look, for instance, at the *Harry Potter* series, which, although considered as low quality

literature by many literary critics, seems to have brought attention to a generally neglected genre, also giving greater visibility to Italian authors of the same genre and helping to promote them abroad. I conclude the chapter and the whole thesis by introducing two Italian examples, the saga of *Ulysses Moore* and the series of *Geronimo Stilton*, as products of a different way of writing and producing children's literature in Italy that has been highly influenced by a kind of 'globalised' writing which is intentionally not marked by any local distinctive features.

Chapter 1

The Status of Original and Translated Children's Literature in Italy

Introduction

In 2004, more than 8000 people signed *Il manifesto della letteratura per l'infanzia* ("La grande esclusa" 19) as a protest against the then Italian *Ministro dell'Istruzione*, Letizia Moratti, and against the exclusion of children's literature from the *Indicazioni Nazionali per i Piani di Studio personalizzati nella Scuola (Primaria)*. This manifesto, promoted and supported not only by Italian scholars, writers, teachers, and librarians, among others, but also by international figures such as Jack Zipes, Alison Lurie and Neil Gaiman, complained against the measures taken by Moratti, and asked for a revision of the text. The manifesto's main demand was the inclusion in the school curriculum of precise references to literature for children as an essential didactic and intellectual resource for students and teachers. Emy Beseghi, Professor of *Letteratura per l'infanzia* at the *Università di Bologna*, warned about the danger of leaving children's literature out of the primary school programs ("Fuori dalla porta" 17-20); while many teachers would certainly continue to use literature in their classes, many others might

take the *Indicazioni Nazionali* literally (“La grande esclusa” 23). One of the most likely and damaging consequences of that would lead to pupils being divided into two categories – those who, benefiting from a domestic environment in which books are present and reading encouraged, would be able to do without them at school and, on the other hand, those lacking such an environment, who would be denied any opportunity to engage with literature (“La grande esclusa” 25-6).

That initiative has been an unexpected backward step. In the preceding few decades, Italian children’s literature has achieved a great deal as a discipline in terms of greater visibility at university, within the *Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione Primaria*; at present there is awareness of the importance of the act of reading and of the role of the school in promoting it. However, progress towards academic autonomy and the carving out of a specific place in educational culture do not mean, unfortunately, that the condition of this literature as a ‘Cinderella subject’ (Shavit 4) has been fully overcome. This situation is reflected at different levels.

In 2008, out of 2204 new children’s books published in Italy 1132 were translations and, among them, 534 were books imported from the UK (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, “Rapporto 2009” 27). Such a high percentage of translations cannot but have a strong impact on Italian literature and contribute to a great extent to its development. Yet, in Italy, academic

research on translated books for children is mostly neglected. In a sense, they are treated as indigenous literature: the fact that they come from different countries and have originally been written in different languages has not been subjected to any systematic research, but they are not considered as an integral part of the corpus of Italian books for children either. Therefore, the impact of translations on Italian original literature for children has never been investigated. This gap is serious not only because it underestimates the growing importance of Translation Studies as a research field, but especially because it leads us to a misrepresentation of national literature for children, which is strongly influenced by translations both in terms of numbers and literary influence.

The exclusion of children's literature from school programs and limited interest in translations are two related circumstances and they stem from the same context. In general terms, children's literature, whether indigenous or translated, is mainly identified with its didactic function and this may be the reason why it has been neglected as an academic subject for research. There is an urgent need to devote attention to its several facets; there is a disjunction between the economic value of children's literature, represented by the dynamic and international *Fiera del libro di Bologna* and the academic value, which is limited to a purely national frame (Boero, "Storie in cattedra" 30-1).

The first part of this chapter will aim at investigating the causes determining the current position and status of literature for children in the Italian literary system. Historically, research in this field has been conducted almost exclusively in the domain of educational sciences, by focusing on research questions (for example, the aspect of reading) linked to specific objects of interest, while other fields have completely ignored literature for children as a research object. The second part of the chapter will thus attempt to trace, in broader scope, the history of the interaction between translated and Italian books for children within the same subsystem; more specifically, the process of negotiation and adjustment between conservative and innovative forces that has represented the most remarkable constant in the interplay between translations and indigenous literature in Italian literature for children. In this respect, in order to consider literature for children as a dynamic system, some concepts drawn from polysystem theory, both in Itamar Even-Zohar's formulation and in its following adaptation to literature for children by Zohar Shavit, have been used for the analysis. Polysystem theory offers a set of hypotheses that help in the understanding of some of the behavioural patterns of children's literature, both indigenous and translated, within a broader cultural and socio-economic context. Furthermore, it makes it easier to ascertain the relations that this literature establishes with other fields. Making use of theories of

children's literature drawn from an international perspective assists in examining the conditions of indigenous children's literature, and provides a research approach that facilitates the study of children's literature in translation.

1. The Position of Italian Children's Literature within the Cultural Polysystem

Italian children's literature can be regarded as part, or as a subgroup, of different systems in which it plays different roles, and therefore should be analysed differently according to the role it plays in each. This feature is better observed at a systemic level, through the dichotomy of the 'centre-periphery' proposed by Even-Zohar. According to this scholar, the cultural polysystem is a dynamic entity and its elements are continuously subject to changes of status and position. Hence, for instance, 'phenomena are driven from the center to the periphery while, conversely, phenomena may push their way into the center and occupy it' (14).

Within a national context – what Even-Zohar might term the Italian cultural polysystem – children's literature does not form its own distinctive system, but is instead defined by and dependent on stronger systems such as literature for adults, pedagogy, or market forces in the publishing industry. This is mainly due to the history and tradition of this body of literature, strictly bound to childhood, representing a minority group that

has historically suffered a status of inferiority and subordination to other groups. Thus, for instance, the main system of literature does not ascribe high value to literature for children, which results in the acceptance of the status of a minor subject in literary research. Conversely to this hierarchy of literary value, children's literature is one of the central research objects of pedagogy and educational sciences, and one of the most profitable (and thus central) publishing sectors.

The fact that histories of Italian literature ignore children's literature⁷ may stem from the primary, indissoluble link between children's literature and education, which has always been regarded as a handicap to a full appreciation of its aesthetic value. The reasons for this double 'didactic-aesthetic' approach, and the problems in defining this literature's epistemological content and determining its boundaries as a research object, date from the nineteenth century, when the educational function of western children's literature was predominant. The new organization of society and a new concept of childhood⁸ led to the use of children's literature to promote conformity to bourgeois values, leading it to develop a

⁷ Boero and De Luca's manual, *La Letteratura per l'infanzia*, represents the attempt to fill this gap in literary research on children's literature (VIII). According to them: '[l]atitanza ancora più grave è quella della totalità dei manuali di storia letteraria (anche quelli monumentali). Qui la letteratura per l'infanzia gioca davvero la parte della 'grande esclusa'. Si dedica più o meno sufficiente attenzione al Pinocchio di Collodi e al Cuore di De Amicis, e per il resto nulla. Come se in Italia non si fossero scritti e pubblicati altri libri per i piccoli e buona parte del mercato librario non fosse da sempre sostenuta dalla produzione e diffusione di storie per l'infanzia' (VIII).

⁸ This new concept of childhood was theorised by the French historian Phillipe Ariès in his work *Centuries of Childhood* (1962).

tradition based on both literature and pedagogy, while fulfilling respectively aesthetic and educational functions within these two systems (Cambi and Cives 51-4).

However, in the Italian context these two components have never exerted equal force, or been acknowledged as having the same importance; the didactic constituent has routinely been considered as a negative factor, meaning children's literature was kept at the periphery of the literary system while at the same time reaching the centre of the educational system and pedagogical research. The exclusivity of the pedagogic research approach is currently a manifest and observable phenomenon. According to Terry Frongia,

...if one goes to Italy and searches for any kind of scholarly work on children's literature, one must head for the "Pedagogy" or "Didactics" section of the library or bookstore, for that is the category under which such works are classified. They are never integrated with the "Literature" section. (And since the *reading* of children's literature is so closely associated with scholastic endeavor, one often turns to the "School Textbook" section of the bookstore to find much of it.). (56)

Frongia identifies a number of reasons behind these attitudes. One is the predominant attention given by scholars to the child as the explicit addressee of this literature is automatically linked to her/his necessary condition as a student during the years in which s/he is supposed to handle these books. This leads to views according to which, when studying

children's literature, '...an understanding of subjects such as developmental theory and pedagogy...[is] as important as a comprehension of, say, literary history, aesthetics, or contemporary theories in semiotics' (56). The second reason that Frongia has identified points more directly to the national specificity of the concept of education, a concept which

...informs not only the structure and content of education but the very foundations of children's literature...the "marriage" of art and instruction - especially on the Italian scene, as Rebecca West has so cogently pointed out - is not only accepted, but absolutely fundamental to discussions of children's literature theory. (57)

Several causes contributed to create this situation, not least of which was criticism expressed by some prominent literary figures in the first decades of the twentieth century, some of which have weighed Italian children's literature down for a long time and are still perceived as objectionable by many. After Alessandro Manzoni who, in 1836, refused to write hymns for children arguing that any pedagogical aim would have limited his art (qtd. in Pitzorno, "Storia" 38), it was above all Benedetto Croce's ideas on the subject that influenced the image of children's literature for decades. These ideas have represented one of the main reasons (or in many cases one of the main excuses) for keeping children's literature in a peripheral position within the literary system. Croce claimed

that

...l'arte per *bambini* (ecco la pregiudiziale) non sarà mai arte vera. Sotto l'aspetto pedagogico, ossia dello sviluppo dello spirito infantile, a me sembra che difficilmente si possa dare in pascolo ai bambini l'arte pura, che richiede per essere gustata, maturità di mente, esercizio di attenzione e molteplice esperienza psicologica. Lo splendido sole dell'arte pura non può essere sostenuto dall'occhio ancor debole dei bambini e dei fanciulli...se anche i bambini riescono a gustare un'opera d'arte pura, questa sarà fatta non per essi ma per tutti. (116-7)

According to the philosopher, children do not possess that aesthetic maturity needed to fully appreciate 'pure art'. This statement excludes virtually any possibility of a coexistence of true art and literature for children, for two main reasons. The first is inherent in the object: pure art does not have any purpose. The second is inherent in the child reader, deemed as too immature to fully comprehend art. Since pure art, according to Croce, admits neither any secondary purpose nor any implied reader, we may logically conclude that literature for children, characterized by having a scope and a specific addressee, will never be perceived as true art.

As mentioned before, the ghettoisation of literature for children to the margins of the Italian literary system was counterbalanced by a gradual further enforcement of its educational component in the same period. During the 1920s,

the status of Italian children's literature and the differentiation of its roles in separate contexts was accentuated by the publication of the first histories of children's literature. In 1923, a school reform was passed by the then secretary of education in Mussolini's government, the neo-idealist philosopher Giovanni Gentile. The *Istituto Magistrale*, the high school in which prospective primary school teachers would be trained, was created and an intensive knowledge of children's literature was included among the requirements to be met in order to pass the public exam for teaching qualifications. In this way, literature for children officially entered the system of school education and the domain of the State. Moreover, research on the subject was stimulated by the increased demand for the publication of manuals and histories of children's literature.

Prior to the reform, the educational attributes of literature for children were seen as predominant, and it was considered aesthetically as an inferior literary subsystem. The reform, by officially transforming children's literature into a didactic instrument, had different effects. On one hand, it stimulated academic interest: literary scholars were asked to analyse children's books and to make the subject more widely known. On the other hand, the reform assigned a fixed, didactic function to children's literature within the educational context. Since early histories of children's literature were targeted at future primary school teachers, they mostly contained lists of

authors supplemented by brief summaries of their works and by some discussions on the themes they addressed and their degree of suitability as schoolbooks for children. Although children's literature was 'institutionally' recognised as a didactic vehicle and a research object within the field of pedagogy, it was importantly still judged by aesthetic standards as an inferior genre, according to literary-critical dogma, making any kind of emancipation more difficult.

These considerations were already debated at the time. Giuseppe Fanciulli and Enrichetta Monaci, the authors of one of the most well known histories of children's literature⁹ of the time, replied to Croce's criticism, stating that the fact that the literature for children consists of many books whose bases are pedagogical does not necessarily imply that this literature is not able to produce works that also have aesthetic qualities (4-5). They pointed out that 'art' is always moral and thus good books for children can be both aesthetically and educationally valuable (6). The *Manuale di letteratura infantile*, written by Olindo Giacobbe and published in its first edition in 1923, was also one of the books that came out in response to the reform.¹⁰ In the preface, Giacobbe remarked on the lack of

⁹ *La letteratura per l'infanzia* aimed at 'offrire ai maestri italiani, e a tutti coloro che si interessano della cultura e dell'educazione nazionale, un'opera ampia, se non completa, dati i necessari limiti del volume' (Fanciulli and Monaci 7).

¹⁰ Giacobbe says that the book was born '...quando la riforma scolastica fece obbligo a tutti i maestri e a tutti i direttori didattici, che si presentassero a sostenere esami di concorso, di avere idee chiare e precise intorno a quelle opere e a quegli scrittori che avevano cercato il loro pubblico di lettori in mezzo ai fanciulli ed ai giovani (Preface).

attention paid to this literature by literary criticism before 1923 (Prefazione). Another well known history of literature for children was Vincenzina Battistelli's *La letteratura infantile* published in 1923. In *Il libro e il fanciullo*, a subsequent edition of that text, Battistelli addresses the issue again:

La vecchia questione se esista o non esista una letteratura infantile dovrebbe essere ormai risolta in senso negativo. Si accese di tinte vivacemente polemiche allorchè, per la prima volta, la letteratura infantile figurò tra le materie d'insegnamento dell'Istituto magistrale. Allora nacque questo libro col titolo *La letteratura infantile...*, titolo che trasse in inganno qualche critico frettoloso il quale, risparmiandosi la fatica di leggere almeno qualche pagina, lo bollò come sostenitore di un genere letterario la cui esistenza non è legittima nè in sede artistica nè in sede pedagogica. (XI)

According to Battistelli, literature for children does not constitute a literary genre per se; books for children when appreciated by their readers have to be considered as art in general without any limitation (XI). On the other hand, a work written with a specific young addressee in mind and a pre-determined educational aim is not to be regarded as literature but only as an 'espediente didattico indegno della vera arte educativa o una speculazione commerciale che invano pretende al battesimo artistico' (XII).

This increased consideration given to children's literature in an educational context brought, in the long run, the exclusion

of Italian children's literature from the field of literary research, with the consequence of guaranteeing a monopoly of pedagogy. Here, literature for children started to be seen as a valuable research object developing within a field whose primary objectives understandably prioritized some issues to the disadvantage of others,¹¹ where the central interest lay in the didactic function of books as primary instruments of learning throughout the child's formative experience.

It was in the 1960s that research on children's literature officially entered academia. In 1962 at the University of Padova, Giuseppe Flores d'Arcais set up the *Settore di Ricerca sulla Letteratura Giovanile*, and in 1967, at the same university, the first course in *Storia della Letteratura per l'Infanzia* was convened by Anna Maria Bernardinis (Boero and De Luca 241-77). The shared aim of this newly-established scholarly research on children's literature seemed to be an attempt to relocate this body of literature in a wider, cultural context. The original approach to the subject put forward by Antonio Faeti, for example, introduced remarkable innovations. Although his main perspective remained a pedagogic one, Faeti underlined the interdisciplinarity of the field, supporting his studies with methodologies borrowed from disciplines such as literature, history, linguistics, and history of art (among others), in order to first establish and then investigate the subject's many aspects

¹¹ Such as for example, translation.

(Ascenzi, "Letteratura per l'infanzia" 93).

Furthermore, the 1980s saw further progress in academic research on Italian literature for children, giving rise to a new awareness. Anna Ascenzi suggests that the turn which has taken place in the last few decades can be ascribed to the release from two main constraints: firstly, that for which children's literature cannot be explored by tools other than those borrowed from literature; and, secondly, the Crocian burden, which was for a long time responsible for the peripheral position of children's literature within the Italian literary system. These changes resulted in the re-evaluation of the educational component of this literature. Considered by many as an obstacle to a full appreciation of the genre, from the 1980s onwards, its educational nature has gradually come to represent a focal and positively regarded feature of it (Ascenzi, "Storia" 112-3).

The discipline, recognised at academic level, has then developed towards a more complete acknowledgement of its dimensions: the educational, the linguistic, the literary and the historical. However, due to the fact that these decisive steps have taken place exclusively within the field of educational sciences, all the efforts towards the emancipation of research on children's literature are directed by goals that serve to keep the subject consigned within the education context, and whose boundaries are difficult to cross. In the meantime, its condition

of inferiority persists or even increases in other contexts.¹² Cambi and Cives point out that the reasons behind the undervaluation of literature for children have to be ascribed to parents, teachers, scholars, pedagogues and more generally to a society that does not acknowledge the value and importance of the encounter between the child and the book (10). What is more, a serious misunderstanding has resulted from considering the double component of this literature, which 'partecipa a pieno diritto dell'universo dei discorsi narrativi...e alle loro tensioni creative...ma al tempo stesso si innesta...nei discorsi pedagogici, nella loro normatività e nella loro ottica conformatrice' (48), as a defect and not as the inherent identity of literature for children. Instead, the plurality of functions which characterize it should be taken as a sign of positive complexity (48) and should not be ignored if one wants to see the entire picture.

The 'double nature' of children's literature is a feature of this genre not only limited to the Italian context, but recognised by many studies as characteristic of western literature for children in general, given the common historical and cultural context in which this body of literature was born and has grown. In this respect, Maria Nikolajeva remarks on the necessity of accepting this component of children's literature in a more distributed context: 'The principal difference between research

¹² According to Ascenzi, the hope for literature for children to be treated as a literary genre embedded in the socio-cultural and historical context of the educational processes is still to be fully realised ("Storia" 110-2).

on children's literature and general literary criticism – and this factor is reflected in the way the history of literature is written – is that children's literature has from the very beginning been related to pedagogics' (3). This situation is also clearly reflected in the academic world. In 2001 Jack Zipes, in describing the situation of the North American academic context, stated that: 'Many of the leading universities in the country still do not have courses in children's literature', which instead '...is still being relegated to schools of education and library science...' (27-8). However, things have seemed to change since the 1990s. According to Lissa Paul:

...English departments...have not, until recently, been particularly hospitable places for children's literature scholarship or teaching. There had been scattered courses and programs, and there had been scholarly journals such as *Signal*, *Children's Literature*, and *The Lion and the Unicorn*, but it wasn't until the 1990s that the scholarly apparatus in the field began to acquire the critical mass necessary to support the academic discipline of children's literature studies. And it appears that within the next few years, there will be several new massive scholarly reference works (currently in production) on children's literature in print. (246-7)

Figures gathered in Italy in 2008 show that out of thirty-four courses of children's literature, four are hosted by the *Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia*, twenty-nine by the *Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione Primaria* and one by *Scienze Umane*

e Sociali (Montino 30). As a consequence, the vast majority of works on children's literature are written by scholars from the field of pedagogy. The application of theories drawn from other disciplines to the study of children's literature, in an effort to derive the greatest possible advantage from the interdisciplinarity of the subject, seems to many international scholars in the field the best possible answer to the problem:

All will take as normal the idea that children's literature studies include scholarship in education, library science, visual literacy, publishing, book history, educational history, and a number of contemporary theoretical discourses including gender theories, cultural studies, semiotics, ideology, and reader response theories. (Paul 247)

This view is shared in Italy by many specialists who agree that the future of the discipline should be focused on the application of a more interdisciplinary approach. The main obstacle is seen in the condition of isolation separating children's literature from a wider cultural discourse, with no effort made to trace the manifold links with the rest of literature and other areas of cultural expression. Similarly, Emy Beseghi calls for the enlargement of the context in which the analysis of books for children is to be set and for the use of assorted approaches: historical (children's books are documents through which to build the history of childhood), and also philosophical, literary, and pedagogical. Moreover, iconography,

massmediology and orality are dimensions of literature for children that cannot be ignored ("Confini" 72-9). Renata Lollo also considers the anthropological-cultural, psychological and communicational aspects of children's literature as capable of revealing its richness ("Letteratura per l'infanzia" 41-2).

Paradoxically, the difficulty of fully appreciating the richness and potentiality of this literature does not stem only from an erroneous external perception, but also from within the field, and this does not apply exclusively to the Italian environment. Nikolajeva describes the situation in Sweden as follows:

...although children's literature has at long last made its way into general literary history, even today many literary critics do not take children's literature seriously. The reason for this is not only that they lack insight, but also has to do with the self-imposed isolation of children's literature researchers. Many of us still often see the primary subject of our research to be not children's literature but children's *reading*. (4)¹³

¹³ According to Jill P. May, 'Often the study of children's literature within colleges and universities serves strange purposes. It takes the place of serious literature study. A children's literature course will usually include undergraduates in teacher education and other fields. Those students who hope to teach take the course because it is required. They hope to discover how literature can be shared across the curriculum. They want to use "real books" while teaching about things other than pleasure reading. They don't believe that pleasure reading and literary patterns are relevant to their training. Those who are not in education hope to take an enjoyable but easy literature class. The students who come from areas like English, communications, and theater often were readers as children and want to take a trip through some of their past favourites, to see if children's literature can somehow fit into their adult lives. Neither group expects a course that will concentrate on critical thinking, individual analysis, and divergent literary interpretations of one story. One group hopes to learn relevant modes of teaching that most often meet with success, while the other wants time "to

As mentioned in the first part of this section, children's literature can be regarded as a subsystem of different systems, where it occupies different positions and acquires different statuses in relation to those systems. In the publishing sector, for example, the production of children's books plays a central role – a fact which underlines that there is often little connection between academic research and the editorial world. Looking at the market dimension and the international context of children's books, it is evident that the international dimension represented by the Bologna Book Fair does not reflect this sort of parochialism in the approach to literature for children taken by academic research in Italy and apparently also in other countries. Although it is evident that the fair is a commercial event more than a literary one, it appears that research has not been able to keep pace with the growth of this publishing sector which has, in the last decades, become increasingly powerful in the global market. The reason for this disparity could be that the bases on which that global publishing market has been built do not overlap with, and in fact often challenge, the mechanisms of academic research. Moreover, a more flexible cultural outlook towards this branch of literature has developed in Italy. These observations are made in relation to two specific subsystems, those of indigenous and translated literature for

read like a child”(6).

children in Italy.¹⁴

The following part of this chapter will draw on these premises in order to locate translated children's books in the system of Italian literature for children and thus also to underline the role played by translations in their interaction with Italian literature.

2. Translations as a System

As already mentioned in the main introduction to this thesis, the status of indigenous literature seems to affect that of translated literature greatly (Shavit 112). In Italy, as we have seen, children's literature does not occupy the same position in all the co-systems of which it is part and this has repercussions in the position of translations. Moreover, each system gives priority to its own interests through the imposition of norms that are well reflected in translation.

In describing the literary polysystem, Even-Zohar states that '...there is no awareness of the possible existence of translated literature as a particular literary system. The prevailing concept is rather that of "translation" or just "translated works" treated on an individual basis' (Even-Zohar 45). What Even-Zohar described as the state of translated literature in general is still valid for children's literature in translation in Italy today. In other words, although translations

¹⁴ This aspect of the globalization of the market of children's books will be treated more extensively in Chapter Five.

constitute a system themselves there seems to be no 'awareness' and recognition of that phenomenon in Italy.

As a matter of fact, the only imported books for children which are approached and studied as translations are either established classics (for instance, *Alice in Wonderland*) or books which stand out for other reasons, such as, for example, works translated by well-known writers for adults, those adapted from adult literature, or international best-sellers (*Harry Potter*). The remaining translations are treated as if they were Italian children's literature with scarce attention paid to mechanisms of reception, reciprocal influence and affiliation to target models or to the translator. As a result, in spite of the considerable presence of translations in the Italian system, their study is largely neglected. Even when translations are treated in histories of children's literature (either confined to separate sections or treated together with indigenous literature), their study is not undertaken with appropriate research tools.

In the preface to the history of children's literature used in this chapter as one of the most comprehensive sources on the subject, the co-authors Boero and De Luca claim that they will refer to translations within the target context in order to highlight their significant influence on Italian literature:

Per quel che riguarda gli autori stranieri abbiamo adottato un criterio particolare. In molti manuali scolastici di letteratura per l'infanzia essi

sono trattati in capitoli specificamente dedicati alle rispettive aree nazionali. Parlando noi di sviluppo della letteratura per l'infanzia in Italia, ovviamente non potevamo fare altrettanto. Abbiamo allora ritenuto che la scelta più giusta fosse quella di calare in ciascun capitolo il riferimento alle opere - e in generale alla poetica - degli stranieri tradotti in quel momento storico in Italia, cercando, soprattutto, di precisarne l'influenza sugli autori italiani o leggendo in trasparenza il loro successo di pubblico. (IX-X)

And some lines later they add:

Tale criterio è stato adottato in funzione dell'idea che l'insieme delle opere tradotte costituisce all'interno del generale sistema italiano, un sottosistema con un proprio sviluppo storico e un'articolata varietà interna. Se attentamente indagato, svela tendenze culturali, aperture e chiusure, suggestioni, intolleranze e rifiuti che via via hanno caratterizzato la storia culturale. (X)

This statement, while showing a positive and competent disposition towards the recognition of translations as forming a system and of the importance of their influence on indigenous literature, still highlights obstacles to a constructive approach to the study of translated children's literature. Though well aware of the role played by translations, Boero and De Luca's attention to foreign works is not supported by any methodological or hermeneutical approach; any hint at possible lines of interpretation is not framed within translation theory, and they do not seem to acknowledge the fact that a great part

of the history of Italian children's literature cannot be thoroughly understood without referring to the interaction between the two systems. It is therefore necessary to explore not only the main characteristics of children's literature in translation, but above all the mechanisms activated by the inclusion of books for children in translation within the specific national context of Italian literature as described in the previous part of the chapter.

2.1 The Interaction between Translations and Italian Children's Literature: Conservatism and Innovation

Despite scarce recognition, translated books for children have always numerically represented a large proportion of Italian children's literature and at the same time a profitable area of the publishing sector. There seem to have been two main functions fulfilled by foreign literature in the Italian target system: either to maintain the pre-constituted order or to bring in innovation. The former is especially the case for books imported to support the main didactic and morally instructive tendency of national literature or, in particular periods of time, the dominant political ideologies (for example, during Fascism). The latter refers to works that have helped to transfer new models and narrative themes to Italian literature.

The history of the impact of translated children's literature in Italy can be thus read as a continuous act of negotiation

between more or less innovative inputs coming from outside, and the persistent endeavour exercised from the inside to inscribe importations into pre-existent, traditional target model. The degrees of openness and closure vary according to the specific historical and cultural conditions of Italian children's literature at different times. Thus, for example, the rejection of foreign importation manifested during Fascism is counterbalanced by a greater receptiveness showed in the 1980s due to commercial forces. However, the overall predominant inclination of Italian literature for children seems to have been more conservative than innovative, with the tendency of either bringing in translations expressing the norms of the target culture or of adapting them to coeval 'home' production. Moreover, a conservative approach appeared to be somehow inherent also in the process itself of translating literature for children compared to that for adults. As Shavit claims,

Translation of children's literature tends to relate the text to existing models in the target system. This phenomenon...is particularly prominent in the translation of children's literature because of the system tendency to accept only the conventional and the well known. If the model of the original text does not exist in the target system, the text is changed by deleting or by adding such elements as will adjust it to the integrating model of the target system. This phenomenon also existed in the past in various adult literatures, although long after it ceased to be prevalent in the adult canonised system, it still

remained prominent in children's literature. (115)

The practice of translating children's books, compared to that of literature for adults, has usually allowed much more freedom in terms of cuts, additions, bowdlerisations and adaptations, all of which were made mainly in order to conform to the target systems. This has often been justified on the basis that the child, as the implied reader, needs to be 'accompanied' through a text which can be difficult to read due to a different cultural context and to the presence of foreign allusion. According to Göte Klingberg, the interventions made by translators in books for children mostly show the tendency towards adaptation of the source text to what the target culture thinks is appropriate for the child, both from a didactic and moral point of view, and in order to meet his/her reading and comprehension ability (10). These objectives influence the process of translation from the very beginning, that is, from the choice of the source text to be translated.

The manipulation of the source text thus mostly responds to the will to conform to the norms (social, literary, pedagogical, and ideological) of the target context, leading to situations in which the function fulfilled by a book in the target culture has ended up being different from that performed in the source culture. This is where *skopos* theory, according to which the act of translation and its final form is largely determined by its aim

and by the function that the translation is going to fulfil in the target culture, can come in useful (Reiss and Vermeer; Nord). In children's literature in general, what mostly influences the *skopos* is the consideration of the implied reader, namely, the child. Peter Hunt observes that 'children's literature is defined by its audience in a way that other literatures tend not to be' (8). The addressee determines the epistemological discourse of this literature much more than that of literature for adults. They also inform the principles of the affiliation of the text to the norms of the target models.

The choice between affiliation to and a break with pre-existing literary target models can be determined by several factors. These can be either purposely predisposed and driven by agents involved in the processes of acquisition, translation and distribution of the text, or accidentally determined by unpredictable variants, often linked to audience response. In this respect, the figures of the translator and of the editor are among the most important agents involved in this process. By means of their translation policy, these agents determine the form (and thus influence the reception) of the translation in the target literature:

Since translational activity participates, when it assumes a central position, in the process of creating new, primary models, the translator's main concern here is not just to look for ready-made models in his home repertoire into which the source texts would be

transferable. Instead, he is prepared in such cases to violate the home conventions. Under such conditions the chances that the translation will be close to the original in terms of adequacy (in other words, a reproduction of the dominant textual relations of the original) are greater than otherwise. Of course, from the point of view of the target literature the adopted translational norms might for a while be too foreign and revolutionary, and if the new trend is defeated in the literary struggle, the translation made according to its conceptions and tastes will never really gain ground. But if the new trend is victorious, the repertoire (code) of translated literature may be enriched and become more flexible. Periods of great change in the home system are in fact the only ones when a translator is prepared to go far beyond the options offered to him by his established home repertoire and is willing to attempt a different treatment of text making. (Even-Zohar 51)

Translating books for children is considered as a sub-category of translating for adults. This is due to the spread of the belief that literature for children is an inferior genre, and so is the quality of its translations. Neither the position occupied by translated children's books as a subgroup, nor the fact that translations have always been merged into the target system to the extent of appearing as indigenous literature, appears surprising. Until recently, even foreign authors' personal names were 'Italianised', while translators' names were not given or, when included, were printed in a very small font and appeared only in the copyright page. Since the nineteenth century, Italian children have been familiar with Guglielmo Grimm, Daniele De

Foe, Gionata Swift, Enrichetta Beecher-Stowe and Luisa Alcott.

During the emergence of children's literature in Italy, the function fulfilled by translations was mainly a conservative one. Works closer to the models of didactic literature or at least conforming to the same values were encouraged. Conventionally, Italian children's literature is thought to begin with the Unification of the Italian State (1870), to which more defined lines of a national literary development can be traced. Before then, production consisted of didactic books purposely written for the use of primary school teachers and pupils (Boero and De Luca 3) and moral tales usually written by clergymen. An example would be *Il Giannetto* by Luigi Alessandro Parravicini (1800-1880), published in 1837, one of the most representative books of the time. The author, as an educator, wrote a schoolbook in which the encyclopaedic teaching of history, geography and science was framed in a moral tale about the life story of the main character, Giannetto. For many years Parravicini's book was adopted by teachers in Italian schools.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the Italian translations of the works of the French author Arnaud Berquin (1749-91) boosted the national production of moral tales. Berquin 'diventa punto di riferimento per coloro che nell'Italia risorgimentale troveranno produttivo – come fa il pedagogo francese dopo la Rivoluzione – agganciarsi al mondo della

campagna e ai valori della terra' (Boero and De Luca 4). Within English literature, Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849) was recognised by Italian educators as an authoritative voice. The translator of her works, Bianca Milesi Mojon (1791-1849), seemed to have been drawn to the translation of Edgeworth firstly to improve her maternal skills as an educator of her own children:

She published, from time to time, "First Lessons for a Child from four to five years old," apropos of which Manzoni called her the "Mother of her Country;" a translation of Mrs. Barbauld's "Hymns in Prose;" "Advice to Mothers;" translated from English; and all the first series of Miss Edgeworth's books for children (*Education Familierès*). As soon as she found a book useful for her boys her benevolence led her to desire that others should profit by it. Her letters are full of regrets for the little attention paid in Italy to the education of children, and of entreaties to her friends to second her efforts in diffusing good books and good methods of instruction. (Souvestre 648)

As a translator, Milesi Mojon also contributed to reinforcing the tradition of edifying tales by importing the German novellas of Johann Christoph von Schmid (1768-1854) whose narratives found a fertile soil in Italy for their simple style and the Christian values expressed (Giacobbe 379). The use of short stories as the bearers of an educational message was a mode that would persist in Italian schools for a long time, as documented by the number of successive translations

published (Boero and De Luca 4).

If the prevailing tendency was that of the import of didactic works, there was also that of books which, though still mainly didactic, could also satisfy a demand for amusement and act as vehicles of new literary models. Thanks to this tendency, germs of innovation inevitably crossed Italian borders. The import of books able to offer a real alternative to Italian instructive and moralising works was supported especially by adaptations for children of books for adults, or by books whose educative intents were softened by a pleasing narrative, namely books such as *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), translated in 1745; *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), translated after 1860; *The Last of the Mohicans* (1828), translated in the same year; *Oliver Twist* (1837), translated in 1840; and *David Copperfield* (1849), translated around 1859 (Boero and De Luca 4-6).

Each of these works had gone through different translational phases that led them to be appreciated in Italy for one or another of their characteristics, and according to the conditions of the target system at the time of reception. *Robinson Crusoe*, for example, came to be known in the peninsula through its adaptations for children (5) from 1745. In adaptation for a different audience some unwelcome parts, especially about religion, could easily be deleted. The reception in Italy of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, on the other hand, was more uneven. It is exactly through this work that Swift started to

be known in Italy, a few years after the publication of the source text in Britain. From 1876¹⁵ Swift's work was assimilated into Italian literature as a book for children in the form of abridgments and adaptations for young Italian readers:

The title of Treves' edition of *Viaggi di Gulliver* reads: 'translated from English and abridged for children' (ad uso dei fanciulli; 1876); the Paravia edition (first voyage only) was explicitly designed for young students of English, and was provided with explanatory notes by its editor, C. Allario who bowdlerised heavily-handedly and, as Pagetti notices, 'produces an inversion of literary values: *Gulliver's Travels* is not longer a book *also* for children, it is a book also for adults' (Pagetti 1971, 154). The shortened edition (the first two voyages) published by Sonzogno (1883), and especially the translation by Luigi De Marchi, published by Hoepli (a very fortunate one, running various reprints until 1946; 1892), 'also' tried to address an adult readership, yet the majority of these abridgments confirms that *Gulliver's Travels* was downgraded to mere children's literature, 'along with the Fairy Tales and the Robinsons' (1842, XII), and deserved the tirade that Aldo Valori would launch against these 'thin booklets' ('smilzi libretti'; 1913, IX). Needless to say, Swift's other works were totally neglected, both by translators and critics. (Gregori 37)

¹⁵ According to Gregori, the good fortune met by the Irish writer in Italy during the eighteenth century faded in the first half of the following century (34). A change occurred when around 1840 two new translations of *Gulliver's Travels* appeared. One of them was modelled on a French translation, while the second, issued in 1842 was a direct translation from English by Gaetano Barbieri (36). Since 1864 the number of abridgments multiplied: eleven had been published by 1899, and children started to be addressed as readers. In 1913, the first complete translation of Swift's book was published (trans. Aldo Valori) which addressed an adult audience. The book was published by Angelo Formiggini (see Chapter Four) for the series 'Classici del ridere'. The twentieth century witnessed a general re-evaluation of Swift's works, and, as a result, abridged adaptations of *Gulliver's Travels* for children were issued together with scholarly essays and integral translations of his works (40).

Oliver Twist (1838) and *David Copperfield* (1849) were translated not long after their publication at home. Dickens' Italian translations were affiliated to the trend of more sentimental types of books. On the other hand, a work such as Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1828), which was translated into Italian in the same year of its publication, spread the seeds of the adventurous model in Italian literature, inspiring and later on favouring, for example, national authors such as Emilio Salgari (1862-1911) (Boero and De Luca 6). This generally happens when the target system opens up to innovation and change and does not prevent translation from importing something new:

...when new literary models are emerging, translation is likely to become one of the means of elaborating the new repertoire. Through the foreign works, features (both principles and elements) are introduced into the home literature which did not exist there before. These include possibly not only new models of reality to replace the old and established ones that are no longer effective, but a whole range of other features as well, such as a new (poetic) language, or compositional patterns and techniques. It is clear that the very principles of selecting the works to be translated are determined by the situation governing the (home) polysystem: the texts are chosen according to their compatibility with the new approaches and the supposedly innovatory role they may assume within the target literature. (Even-Zohar 47)

Innovation through translations seems possible when the conditions of the target system favour it. These conditions also saw innovative indigenous literature as increasingly accepted by the institutions that have control over it. Soon after the unification of the Italian state, the boom of publishing initiatives specifically devoted to children brought an increase in the publication of didactic books for schools showing resistance against any attempt to break these constraints. In 1876, Collodi wrote *Il Giannettino* with a clear reference to Parravicini's *Il Giannetto*, against which it represents a kind of reaction. As noted by Boero and De Luca, 'L'irruzione del *Giannettino* rappresenta il primo caso di scardinamento del sistema ideologico che sacrifica l'infanzia all'altare della morale borghese' (23). The negative response of the champions of the status quo meant that Collodi's work was regarded as not suitable for primary school teaching programs. It was reprimanded for being more entertaining than educational (22). A few years later, however, *Pinocchio* (1883) would ensure a decisive defeat of that educational tradition. Although the story of the puppet could not but be affected by the bourgeois values of the time, and in many ways still conform to them, it brought into the Italian system new components, which greatly differed from coeval works. Irony, for example, was for the first time used in a book for children as an instrument of social and

political criticism.

For some of its characteristics *Pinocchio* is close to the genre of the fable and it seems that Collodi's activity as a translator of this genre notably influenced his original writing.¹⁶ Collodi was commissioned by the publisher Paggi (the same who would publish *Pinocchio* a few years later) to translate some of Perrault's fairy tales, as well as Madame d'Aulnoy and Madame Leprince Beaumont's tales. This collection was published in 1876 as *I Racconti delle fate*. In the preface Collodi says that:

Nel voltare in italiano *I Racconti delle fate* m'ingegnai, per quanto era in me, di serbarmi fedele al testo francese. Parafrasarli a mano libera mi sarebbe parso un mezzo sacrilegio. A ogni modo, qua e là mi feci lecite alcune leggerissime varianti, sia di vocabolo, sia di andatura di periodo, sia di modi di dire: e questo ho voluto notare qui in principio, a scanso di commenti, di atti subitanei di stupefazione e di scrupoli grammaticali o di vocabolario. Peccato confessato, mezzo perdonato: e così sia. (2)

If by comparing Collodi's translation with Perrault's source texts we look at these 'leggerissime varianti', a general attempt of domestication¹⁷ can be noted. As the title *Histoires ou contes du temps passé avec des moralités* indicates, Perrault

¹⁶ According to Bertacchini, 'Collodi non poteva esser giunto senza tirocinio narrativo, senza aver prima sperimentate e redente adeguate e native disposizioni ...quel dominio espressivo così pronto che rimandano le *Avventure*, deve essere maturato a Collodi nel corso di una fertile, estrosa, variata pratica di pubblicista, traduttore e poligrafo (16).

¹⁷ Lawrence Venuti's concept of domestication is referred to here (20).

concludes each tale of this collection with one or two *moralités* in verses. Collodi, in his translation, tends to shorten the morals and often keeps only one of them, rewriting it in prose. Thus, for instance, in the tale *Le chat botté*, Perrault ends the narration with the double moral:

Moralité

Quelque grand que soit l'avantage
De jouir d'un riche heritage
Venant à nous de père en fils,
Aux jeunes gens pour l'ordinaire,
L'industrie et le savoir-faire
Valent mieux que des biens acquis.

Autre moralité

Si le fils d'un Meunier, avec tant de vitesse,
Gagne le cœur d'une Princess,
Et s'en fait regarder avec des jeux morants,
C'est que l'habit, la mine et la jeunesse,
Pour inspirer de la tendresse,
N'en sont pas des moyens toujours indifférents. (142)

Collodi's, on the other hand, translates:

Godersi in pace una ricca eredità, passata di padre in figlio, è sempre una bella cosa: ma per i giovani, l'industria, l'abilità e la svegliatezza d'ingegno valgono più d'ogni altra fortuna ereditata. Da questo lato, la storia del gatto del signor marchese di Carabà è molto istruttiva, segnatamente per i gatti e per i marchesi di Carabà. (54)

Collodi seems to impart to Perrault's text his peculiar narrative tone, more colloquial and more directly ironic. The use of 'modi di dire' and proverbs such as 'tremante come una foglia' for 'tremblant'; 'il matrimonio è la tomba dell'amore'; 'Gli uomini non si misurano a canne!'; 'un buon diavolo ci porti'; and 'chi dorme non piglia pesci' contribute to this picture and makes the tales more familiar to the Italian audience. Other changes and deletions seemed to aim at that effect. In the case of the translation of the *Contes en verse*, Collodi employs verses only for short parts, keeping to prose for most of the narration.

According to Ester Zago, at the time of Collodi's translation the flourishing of the publication of fairy tales was also due to the need to provide school teachers with didactic instruments which were at the same time morally instructive (62). It followed a general interest in fairy tales that Italian culture had started manifesting during that period. The brothers Grimms' folk and fairy tales, for instance, were translated into Italian only in 1875, more than sixty years after their publication in Germany. Moreover, during and soon after the process of unification in Italy, the urgency of consolidating the geographical union by a real social and cultural fusion brought about a situation in which 'just as patriots were striving for the unification of the country, folklorists were seeking to demonstrate, through the study of popular traditions, the

fundamental spiritual unity of the Italian people' (Zago 63). Collodi's translations can be situated in this project, which appears to represent the example of an importation used to fill a gap in a national literature, and therefore modelled according to this need.

The general resistance of the Italian target system to welcoming and absorbing new models 'distant' to domestic children's literature is also evident in the case of *Alice in Wonderland* (1865). The book was translated into Italian for the first time by Dante Gabriel Rossetti's nephew, Pietrocola Rossetti, in 1872. Since this was a limited edition, this translation did not reach a wide audience. Moreover, Alice's fantastic dimension was disorientating for a tradition based on the straightforward display of the pedagogic message, and this is reflected in the irregular reception of the subsequent Italian translations of Carroll's books, at least until the post war period, when nonsense poetry became better known and familiar to the Italian public.

The first Italian translation which met with more success was published in 1908 and translated by Emma Cagli as *Nel paese delle meraviglie*. In the first pages of her translation, Cagli warmly recommends *Alice* to the Italian readers:

...Ma un giorno, dopo ch'ebbe raccolti al suo paese
tanti trionfi, un vivo desiderio la prese
di vedere l'Italia, e con fede e coraggio,

imparò l'italiano e si mise in viaggio...
 Essa, per amor vostro, varcato ha monti e mari,
 e spera che d'affetto non le sarete avari,
 che insieme con Giannetto, Pinocchio e Ciondolino
 di buon grado accordarle vorrete un posticino...(Introduction)

Cagli describes her translation:

Le stesse difficoltà presentava la versione italiana, specialmente per i giochi di parola intraducibili, che si sono dovuti sostituire. Similmente, ad alcune poesie del repertorio infantile inglese, che Alice, nel sogno, recita sbagliandole, fanno riscontro nella traduzione altre poesie che i bambini italiani facilmente riconosceranno. (Introduction)

The main translational strategy is a domesticating one. Thus, for example, as Cagli clearly states above, she substitutes some of the nursery rhymes and nonsense of the source text with well known Italian *filastrocche* for children. 'How doth the little crocodile' (23) of the second chapter is replaced by 'La vispa Teresa' (17), while 'La Chiocciola' (51) is substituted for 'You are old, Father William' (52) in the fifth chapter. Although the translation deprives the target text of the English flavour of rhymes for children, Cagli tries to keep Carroll's parodic intent¹⁸ modifying the famous Italian *filastrocca* by the poet Sailer 'La vispa Teresa'. More generally,

¹⁸ 'How doth the little crocodile' (Carroll 23) is Carroll's parody of Isaac Watts' 'Against idleness and Mischief' (23-4) and 'You are old, Father William' of Robert Southey's didactic poem 'The old Man's Comforts and How He Gained Them' (51).

this translation of *Alice* seems to represent an attempt to make the importation very close to the target model. The tone of the narration, the intertextuality and linguistic choices tend to rebuild the text in order to make it as readable to Italian children as it was to English speaking children. As a result, the ground-breaking qualities of the book are mitigated and made to conform more to the Italian tradition of literature for children of the time.

Translators of children's literature often found themselves trapped in the contradiction between a more conservative or a more innovative translation. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, Italian women translators represented an illustration of this situation.¹⁹ Despite the fact that, as mothers and educators, they were considered the bearers of those values on which the most orthodox Italian tradition was built, as translators, many showed a strong sense of independence by bringing in new models and ideas and sowing the seeds for change. However, the actual exercise of translation was often conducted according to conservative values and the target texts were manipulated in that sense. In fact, the tendencies to either absorb or reject innovation appear more or less accentuated and varied according to the specific historical and cultural conditions of target contexts, and to the agents of transfer. In Italy, the last part of the nineteenth

¹⁹ Chapter Three of this thesis, "Women Writers and Translators of Children's Literature in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century" is entirely devoted to this topic.

century, for example, saw an increase in the importation of books different from indigenous literature, acquiring new models able to stimulate future literary developments. American literature, for example, with *Misunderstood* (1869) by Florence Montgomery (translated in 1902), 'contribuisce a indirizzare la nostra letteratura verso un bambino protagonista disegnato a maglie piuttosto strette, nella sua complessità psicologica, nei suoi difficili rapporti con il mondo adulto' (Boero and De Luca 76). Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1885/1887) and Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868/1908) brought in new narrative modes and different kinds of fictional characters, unknown to Italian literature until then.

However, the groundbreaking potential of some importation was in part restrained by the stronger operation of affiliation to 'home' models. At the beginning of the twentieth century it was thanks to the development of a publishing sector specifically devoted to children that the growth of the subsystem of Italian children's literature gradually sped up, favouring the diversification of production, which responded to demands not exclusively related to education. Magazines for children exemplify this trend as the vehicle for the reception of comic strips, especially American ones. In a period in which books were still prohibitively expensive, children's magazines, being more affordable, represented the most effective vehicles for spreading literature for children in Italy. Magazines could

react more effectively to new literary trends, and develop the entertainment potential of children's literature. Besides, as commercial initiatives, they often proved courageous in advancing a progressive policy by choosing to publish new Italian or foreign works. For example, *Il Giornale dei Bambini*, the first Italian children's journal, came out in 1881 and published *Le avventure di Pinocchio* when Collodi's work was not even regarded as suitable as a schoolbook. *Il Corriere dei Piccoli* (1908-1995) was the first comic-strip journal published in Italy. Through it, many American comic-strip characters became known to the Italian audience, giving a boost to the indigenous production of this genre, and importing

...i personaggi dei fumetti che furoreggiavano in quegli anni negli Stati Uniti: Buster Brown (1902) di Outcalt, Happy Hoolygan (1900) e Maud (1905) di Oppen, i Katzenjammer Kids (1897) di Dirks, the Newlyweds (1904) e Bringing up Father (1914) di McManus. (Boero and De Luca 140)

Yet, the great capacity of innovation represented by these magazines was counterbalanced by the persistent tendency to alter importations to meet expectations of the target model. Comic strips were in Italy affiliated to the genre of literature for children and started addressing exclusively children as an audience. American comic strips, on the other hand, mostly addressed an adult audience and were considered as popular

literature:

In the US, comic strips were not exclusively directed at children. Newspapers included both series which were read by the whole family, usually in Sunday pull-out sections, and others which were specifically targeted at adults, usually daily strips. In contrast, European drawn stories were perceived exclusively as children's literature and often produced for educational purposes rather than for entertainment. (Zanettin 2)

In Italian children's literature comic strips underwent a process of domestication. The names of the characters were Italianised and the balloons were substituted with captions in rhymes (octosyllabic rhymed couplets). This intervention responded to the need to conform to pedagogical norms, given that the shape of balloons was considered an inappropriate means for children to learn their language (Favari 29). In 1908, the first American comic strip entered the Italian target system in the *Corriere dei piccoli*, where *Buster Brown* became *Mimmo*, his sister Mary Jane *Mammola* and the faithful dog Tige took the name of Pinocchio's dog, *Medoro*. Besides, Buster's 'naughtiness' was smoothed in order to make him a good example for children in an attempt at moralising which, although clearly faked in the source text, becomes openly pedagogical in the target culture.

In order to establish the extent to which the genre of

comic strips was domesticated, it is useful to look at their use by the fascist regime in the following decades. The first fascist comic strip magazine was born in 1923 as *Il Giornale dei Balilla*. Due to its success, and encouraged by the general favourable response of Italian children, the regime banned the publication of foreign comic strips in the late 1930s. The main reason behind these drastic measures was certainly of an ideological nature; however, this might also mean that the genre, even if domesticated, could somehow still work as a vehicle of innovation and was, in this sense, not completely without subversive potential.

As referenced earlier, the functions fulfilled by translations in either bringing in innovation or contributing to maintain the status quo are strongly dependent on many factors, including the agents of translation, the conditions of the target literature, and more general cultural and historical circumstances. In this respect, the observation of the ways and forms in which foreign literature is imported during different periods reveals a great deal of the status of indigenous literature too. In the periods treated above, for example, translations reflected the deep-rooted assumption that children had to be given books which conformed to the moral values and social norms dominating the target models. This belief, together with similar assumption that young readers would not be able to cope with foreign cultural references, brought publishers to consider two alternative

strategies; preventative, privileging the importing of books which needed very little or no localisation at all, or corrective, intervening in the text during the act of translation in order to minimise or completely remove what was considered as inappropriate, and to erase any reference to the foreignness of the book.

Furthermore, some norms greatly determine the final form of the translation according to different periods and circumstances. Thus after 1938, any injection of foreign material within Italian literature for children began to be seen as deleterious and was therefore opposed through manipulation and censorship. Repressive measures taken by dictatorial regimes have always been directed against those forces deemed to be potentially subversive, vehicles of libertarian ideas, or issuing from antagonistic countries. Italian and translated children's books were controlled under fascism: the former became instruments of ideological propaganda while the latter were distrusted as vehicles of antifascist values. From 1938 onwards, censorship became more effective, and not only against comic strips. The list of the most harmful authors compiled by fascist authorities included English and American novels and Disney's cartoons. The powerful contextual influence of fascism on translation justifies the fourth chapter of this thesis, in order to observe which norms were influencing the reception of translated literature, accommodating both pre-

existent norms and those superimposed by fascism. Thus in the case of the reaction of Fascism against American comic strips, there is an attack not only against a country with which diplomatic relations were tense at the time, but also against those pre-existing norms according to which comic strips were already being adapted to the Italian traditional model. Overall, Fascism was not able to substitute children's literature (both pre-existing and translated) completely with a new literature.

It was in the post-war period that a first reaction to the extreme closure of the previous decades took place. According to Even-Zohar,

...the process of opening the system gradually brings certain literatures closer and in the longer run enables a situation where the postulates of (translational) adequacy and the realities of equivalence may overlap to a relatively high degree. This is the case of the European literatures, though in some of them the mechanism of rejection has been so strong that the changes I am talking about have occurred on a rather limited scale. (51)

Throughout the decades following the war, the system of Italian original children's literature gradually became more permeable. This was due to both external and internal factors that positively affected national literature and made its borders more easily penetrable. First of all, the recognition of children's literature studies at an international level with the creation of

the *Jugendbibliothek* in Munich in 1949, the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) in 1953 and the *Fiera Internazionale del Libro per l'Infanzia e la Gioventù* in Bologna in 1964 favoured, in Italy, a general desire for renewal, and led to a considerable increase in the import of translations (Tabbert 303-4). Secondly, as mentioned in the first part of this chapter, from the 1960s academic research on children's literature developed considerably.

In this more hospitable context, new models could enter the home system in two ways: either directly, through translations owing to the development of more dynamic international market exchanges, or obliquely, through original works produced by writers influenced by foreign models and repertoires.²⁰ External influences and more courageous editorial choices meant some Italian writers were able to free their writing from a parochial tradition and to propose instead new narrative and language models. Gianni Rodari (1920-1980), an educator and writer for children whose works soon gained an international reputation (he won the Andersen prize in 1970, for instance) through translation, introduced a new way of approaching children through literature. His ideas radically transformed Italian children's literature and paved the way for the penetration of both Italian and foreign authors whose narratives differed from the traditional Italian ones. Thus, for

²⁰ About these developments see Chapter Five.

example, with his essay 'Costruzione di un limerick', he made the model of nonsense better known and used in Italian children's literature. Additionally, innovative publishing initiatives and people, such as, for instance, those of the publishing house Emme and of its founder and editor, Rosellina Archinto, had the merit of importing and making known works which, in the long run, would be able to influence Italian literature to a great extent. However, this openness still found conservative resistance, and initiatives such as Archinto's, although paving the way to future influences, often did not survive.

From the 1980s to the present, the growth of the publishing sector of children's literature in Italy, augmented with the development of a more international dimension, has brought about marked changes. The number of translated books, especially from the UK and US, has increased impressively and, as pointed out in the introduction to this chapter, has ended up comprising a quite steady 50% and above of the entire yearly production.²¹ Publishers claim that their preference for foreign authors rather than Italian ones responds to the need for a wider market, able to offer a more extensive range of alternatives compared to the restricted national product (Seveso 40-1). The Italian publishing industry specialising in juvenile literature has thus developed, assuming

²¹ Data are from the annual reports of the magazine *Liber. Libri per bambini e ragazzi* (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, "Produzione 1987-2008").

some of the characteristics of the globalised market of adult literature such as the hunt for best-sellers, where the most sought-after products are serial books and long-sellers like classics. Strong commercial interests have thus favoured a more open and dynamic interaction between foreign and Italian literature.

According to many, however, this new organisation is having general negative effects on literatures for children, favouring some national literatures over others such as the Italian one:

The conditions of literature for children changed in the course of the late twentieth century, with the children's books industry in the leading market of the USA increasingly dominated by a handful of large media conglomerates who market only what is perceived to be non-culture specific, which usually means no culture other than Anglo-American. We have here an (alleged) cultural neutrality, resulting in levelled-out, international products. Where a clear sense of cultural identity and location is a desirable commodity for local markets, this can be compromised in the global market. (O'Sullivan, Reynolds, Romøren 19)

At present, in the Italian context, the innovative versus conservative role played by imported works seems difficult to discern clearly because new phenomena have entered the picture. For example, there is the evident tendency to import works that the audience has already become familiar with

through massive media and advertising campaigns. At the same time, Italian writers who follow those foreign models already tested as successful (fantasy and vampires stories are the most popular at the moment) are promoted more vigorously in order to cut the costs of copyright and translation (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, “Produzione 1987-2008”). Thus this process stimulates national literature, makes new genres and models take root in the Italian system, and enhances the chances of exporting Italian literature for children abroad; conversely, it enhances the risk of the flattening of national diversities. As an example, *Geronimo Stilton* is the most successful Italian book for children abroad; it is translated in 35 languages and distributed in 180 countries, but shows very little localisation and is not easily identifiable as an Italian literary product.²²

Conclusion

The first part of this chapter has attempted to explain the position occupied by children’s literature within the Italian cultural polysystem. The approach according this literature inferior status to literature for adults, and as a rather narrow phenomenon which is circumscribed by having children as its only readership, persists at present and its causes can be traced back throughout the tradition of this body of literature. Failing to recognise the complex conditions of children’s

²² See Chapter Five.

literature has brought about an incomplete picture of its general status and, with specific reference to the main concern of this chapter, has prevented a clear understanding of the role and position of translation within it.

The second part has highlighted the fact that the impact books for children, when transferred through translation, have on the target system is not only determined by their own features, but especially by circumstances, cultural and historical, of the target literature. This led me to discuss the role played by translations in the specific target system of Italian children's literature during the main stages of its history, focusing on two specific functions assumed by translated books for children in Italian literature, namely conservative and innovative functions, and emphasising the fact that the former has more than often prevailed.

This explains, for instance, why translations are received in a different way and have a different effect on indigenous literature according to different periods in time. The examples used in the chapter (Perrault's fables, *Alice in Wonderland*, American comic strips, among others) have been employed with the intention to show how the meeting and interaction between national literatures (their predominant norms, models and agents) and translations (their innovative or conservative potential) set in motion a process of mutual influence that prospectively end up deeply modifying one or the other. This is

also why the attention to the whole process of translation, from the choice of the source text to its distribution in the target culture, reveals a great deal about the target system. According to Shavit, studies on translations reveal so much about the national original production because they

...expose more clearly the constraints imposed on a text that enters the children's system. This is true, because in transferring the text from the source into the target system translators are forced to take into account systemic constraints. (Shavit 112)

The lack of any systematic and in depth approach to translations not only makes the study of national literature at least incomplete, but it also confirms a perception of the inadequacy of research on children's literature in general, as has been remarked in the first part of the chapter.

Each of the following four chapters will be devoted to specific issues which have already been touched upon in the present chapter. The next section will look at the translation of classics of children's literature in the attempt to simultaneously dispute some critical assumptions, and to see how these works are retranslated today in order to appeal to different audiences.

Chapter 2

Children's Classics in the Italian Context: Some Aspects of their Transformation through Translation from the End of the Nineteenth Century to Today

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I showed that focussing on translated texts opened up the possibility of understanding the target context more thoroughly. The examination of some of the mechanisms that rule the interaction between translations and indigenous texts in Italian literature for children highlighted aspects of the target literature and culture that would have been difficult to observe otherwise. In this respect, for example, phenomena such as the impact that a specific foreign text or literary model has exerted on the development of Italian literature and thus the reaction of the latter to that importation become more visible and easier to examine. In the present chapter, I intend to expand on this process focussing solely on the category of classics for children, both indigenous and translated, in the Italian context.

The only Italian children's classics internationally recognised are Carlo Collodi's *Pinocchio* and Edmondo De Amicis' *Cuore*. Both books were written and published during the second half of the nineteenth century; each of them has achieved success in Italy and abroad for different reasons. During the same period, the number of foreign classics for children that entered the Italian system was much larger. Although I will mainly concentrate on the Italian literary system in order to understand which position classics for children, both indigenous and translated, occupy within it, I will also look at the US context to understand how the Italian children's classic *Pinocchio* was translated for an American audience in the first half of the twentieth century.

Collodi's work is considered a universal text. Despite the numerous adaptations it has undergone, and the sometimes heavy manipulation it has suffered in order to fulfil specific functions and to conform to different target cultures and their audiences, *Pinocchio* is still regarded as a book able to cross cultural and linguistic boundaries naturally. This can be ascribed to the assumption that classic works of literature for children contain transcendent themes of universal value; this quality would make their transfer and adaptation across cultures and languages spontaneous. Yet, this commonly accepted idea clashes with the fact that, 'in terms of adequacy (in other words, a reproduction of the dominant textual relations

of the original)' (Even-Zohar 50), as far as children's literature is concerned, the distance between the source text and different forms of translation is, in most cases, very wide. It is in this respect that the assumed internationalism of classics for children can be challenged, as a perception that inhibits clear understanding how these texts are modified.

This circumstance will be illustrated in different ways. Firstly, examining the translations of *Pinocchio* made in the United States will show the way in which the book was changed in order to meet the expectations of a different culture. Secondly, the observable occurrence that classics for children undergo transformations, and that they are not simply universal, will also be strongly corroborated by looking into translations within the context of the source culture, namely intralingual ones. In this respect, some relevant examples will illustrate how *Pinocchio* is currently presented to an Italian audience. I will look at the new forms in which Collodi's work is still read by children, as well as the distance between the new versions offered to readers today and the original text written in 1883. Has the latter lost its status of source text and its 'authority' as such on the *Pinocchios* read by contemporary Italian children? And have other 'source texts' emerged in the meantime? This analysis reflects upon the need to revisit some of the persisting beliefs about children's literature in an attempt

to reveal how and why the distance between source texts and their translations might end up being very wide.

My use of the term translation in this chapter does not exclusively imply the passage from one cultural and linguistic polysystem into another, but it also indicates shifts occurring within the same polysystem (Shavit 111). As a consequence, the range of texts that the label 'translation', as an umbrella term, can embrace, is broad. In the analysis of the examples selected, I will mainly employ Jakobson's well known categorisation of different types of translations (139). However, new terms also need to be introduced in order to account for different forms of translation.

In the last part of the chapter, I draw on the concept of translation as described above to focus on the different kinds of transformation that classics for children, indigenous and translated, have gone through in the Italian context and the reasons behind those transformations (change of addressee and medium, actualisation, etc.). The aim is to understand how classics for children have been updated in different periods of time to keep appealing to children as readers or to target different audiences, and ascertain what ultimately remains of the source texts.

1. Classics and their Position in Italian Children's Literature

National literatures seem to adopt their own criteria in building a set of canonical texts according to their history and culture. When discussing Italian classics for children, there are only two books unanimously recognised as Italian children's classics *par excellence* both in the source culture and abroad, namely *Pinocchio* (1883) and *Cuore* (1886). These two works have been appreciated by those institutions that determine the canonisation of books to the extent that they have gradually shifted into the realm of classics of mainstream Italian literature.

The general concept of a literary canon has been debated for decades and, as Harold Bloom reminds us, it is a notion which is still inherently controversial:

Canons, which negate the distinction between knowledge and opinion, which are instruments of survival built to be time-proof, not reason-proof, are of course deconstructible; if people think there should not be such things, they may very well find the means to destroy them. Their defence cannot any longer be undertaken by central institutional power; they cannot any longer be compulsory, though it is hard to see how the normal operation of learned institutions including recruitment, can manage without them.
(“Western Canon” 4)

With regards to children's literature, the issue seems even more complex and blurred. Rather than talking of a canon, naming a set of texts that address child readers and that are

considered as high standard literature – classics – seems to many more appropriate. In other words, classics for children are regarded as books that, although close to the aesthetic canons of literature for adults, still possess some features that keep them distant from other adult texts and make them 'suitable' for the readership of children.

According to Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, 'the widespread identification of children's literature with light fiction or popular literature' ("Canon") has, until recently, prevented children's books from being included in the literary canon. However, the process of re-evaluation which these books have gone through lately and which has led to the recognition of literature for children as an autonomous discipline, has brought about an increase in attempts to reread and re-examine works for children that had been neglected in the past for reasons other than their aesthetic value ("Canon") and to include them in the canon. Emer O'Sullivan argues that it is incorrect to talk about the existence of a canon in children's literature because the institutions that create the general literary canon ultimately neglect that literature:

Since schools and universities, with their need to impart exemplary values, have been and still are the main agencies in canon formation, one can understand why, although some individual works of children's literature have been acknowledged as classics, there is no canon of children's literature based on the authority of carefully cultivated tradition....Classics are not what society, academia and

educational authorities have selected as 'the best'; they are often no more (no less) than a market phenomenon. ("Comparative" 131-2)

However, this has not impeded the creation of canons specifically formed within the system of children's literature. In the case of Italian literature for children, for example, educational institutions have played a major role in the creation of a canon. In the first chapter, I mentioned how the increased demand for manuals of children's literature in Italy throughout the 1930s was one of the consequences of the reform of the educational system, the *Riforma Gentile*, passed in 1923, which introduced literature for children among the disciplines required to qualify as a school teacher. This also brought about the need to introduce a set of criteria for the choice and the use of books as didactic tools in the classroom. To this end, these manuals were supplied with lists of works deemed appropriate for each different year, and with specific descriptions of each book according to its suitability as reading matter. This practice led to the creation of a canon of school-texts as a group of books not recognised as classics by mainstream literature.

Most of the Italian books for children published in the late nineteenth century, although still deemed as important testimony witnesses of a specific time, and significant for tracing the history of children's literature, were weighed down by an adherence to conformity and by the will to instruct

children with the pedagogical, moral and social values of the time. The market was dominated by educational books both written in the first part of the century and reedited to be adopted in schools (Parravicini's *Giannetto* (1837), Thouar's *Racconti pei giovanetti* (1852), Cantù's *Il buon fanciullo* (1840), or by new works (Baccini's *Memorie di un pulcino* 1875) that, although presenting some entertaining qualities, were still mainly didactic in nature.

Many factors contributed to the recognition of *Pinocchio* and *Cuore* as classics. One of the reasons was their acknowledgement by the field of literary criticism. However, at first, educational institutions, more specifically the commission instituted to choose texts for primary schools, rejected *Pinocchio* mainly because it was not exactly in line with the characteristics of the didactic literature of the time.²³ Collodi's work was initially regarded with suspicion because it represented novelty in the literary scene. This is evident from its very first lines:

C'era una volta...

- Un re! – diranno subito i miei piccolo lettori.
- No, ragazzi, avete sbagliato. C'era una volta un pezzo di legno. (19)

²³ 'Nel 1883 una commissione ministeriale istruita due anni prima per esaminare i libri di testo e scegliere i più adatti all'adozione...indica tra i non consigliabili i testi di Collodi che "...han pregi molti di sostanza e di dettato, ma sono concepiti in modo così romanzesco, da dar soverchio luogo al dolce, distraendo dall'utile; e sono scritti in stile così gaio, e non di rado così umoristicamente frivolo, da distogliere ogni serietà all'insegnamento"' (Boero and De Luca 22).

Although the 'once upon a time' incipit is borrowed from the genre of fairy tales and Collodi was deeply influenced by that tradition,²⁴ the story narrated and the message conveyed projected this book far from the orthodox books for children of coeval Italian literature.

This is mainly why the book attracted literary critics' attention. Pietro Pancrazi's *Elogio di Pinocchio*, published in 1923, started a critical debate around Collodi's work conducted by the most important literary figures of the time. In 1937 Benedetto Croce enthusiastically praised *Pinocchio*:

...tanto piacque e piace ai bambini, piace anche agli adulti, e non già per il ricordo del piacere che vi provarono un tempo, o non solo per questo, ma proprio per sé stesso...È un libro umano, e trova le vie del cuore. L'autore si mise a scrivere quel racconto strampalato delle avventure di un fantoccio di legno per attirare la curiosità e l'immaginazione dei bambini e somministrare, attraverso quell'ammaestramento, osservazioni e ammonimenti morali...qua e là vi restano, infatti, alcune poche e piccole accentuazioni pedagogiche. Ma presto prese interesse al personaggio e alle sue fortune come alla favola della vita umana, del bene e del male, degli errori e dei ravvedimenti, del cedere alle tentazioni, ai comodi, ai capricci, e del resistere e ripigliarsi e rialzarsi, della sventatezza e della prudenza, dei moti dell'egoismo e di quelli alti e generosi. Il legno, in cui è tagliato Pinocchio, è l'umanità....Il racconto è condotto in tono

²⁴ Before writing *Pinocchio*, Collodi translated some of Perrault's fairy tales and Madame d'Aulnoy's and Madame Leprince Beaumont's tales in his collection *I Racconti delle fate* (1876). See Chapter One.

leggero, con perfetta disinvoltura, tra molte piroette dell'immaginazione e riflessione e motti; e nondimeno non cade mai nel mero stravagante e nell'insulso...Pinocchio fu scritto di vena, in un momento felice, che l'autore non ritrovò più negli altri suoi libri, dove pur sono pagine gradevoli. (327-30)

The importance of *Pinocchio* and *Cuore* is due not only to their literary value, but also to the fact that they reflect, in many ways, the idea of childhood and the historical, cultural and social status of Italy during the liberal age (1861-1922). The two classics represent, in different ways, the contrasting forces operating in the Italian socio-cultural system at the end of the nineteenth century. While in *Pinocchio*, society is described and presented through the use of irony, in *Cuore* a more realistic setting is built to depict what is, nevertheless, an ideal kind of society. De Amicis' work is strongly embedded in the specific historical period known as Liberal Italy and, when first published, it came to represent the mirror of political, social and cultural aspirations of the newborn state. It is the account of a year at a primary school in Turin at the end of the nineteenth century, told from the point of view of a boy. *Cuore* exalts patriotism and family, and it highlights differences between social classes, promoting, at the same time, solidarity among them. In accordance with socialist ideals, the schoolroom is depicted by De Amicis as a microcosm in which children learn how to live and behave within an egalitarian society in which,

along with teachers and parents, they have to become active participants.

The fact that this book is firmly attached to a specific period of the history of Italy has been one of the reasons why the critics' response to it has varied considerably throughout time. *Cuore* was well received in the historical phase of the Liberal age, in which the need to complete the political unification of the state with a social and cultural renewal that could pass through schools, young generations and their families, was strongly felt. During Fascism, on the other hand, it seems that De Amicis' message was only perpetuated by the ideological use that the regime made of it within its wider plan of propaganda (Cambi, "Rileggendo Cuore" 315).²⁵ Afterwards, in post-war Italy, the book underwent a process of deconstruction through which its weaknesses and merits were re-contextualised and re-evaluated (Cambi, "Rileggendo Cuore" 316). One of the most famous criticisms of *Cuore* came from Umberto Eco in his *Diario minimo* (1963). Eco revises the set of values expressed by De Amicis' story and sheds a different light on the roles played by some of the characters. According to Eco, Franti, the most negative figure of the book, is actually the scapegoat of a kind of society which discriminates those who do not conform to specific norms. Instead of punishing and reproving Franti for his conduct, the

²⁵ See also Chapter Four.

school system should re-educate and welcome him. Eco's kind of criticism has freed *Cuore* from its status of indisputable pedagogic model and has, at the same time, confirmed the literary and historical value of De Amicis' work as the product of the Liberal epoch.²⁶ However, compared to *Pinocchio*,

Qualcosa di irrisolto c'è, se nelle antologie scolastiche il libro *Cuore* è a un certo punto scomparso come un tirannosauro e perfino il nome di De Amicis si è rarefatto fino all'assenza. Ho l'impressione ora, sfogliando i libri scolastici, che i pochi casi in cui una paginetta del libro *Cuore* sia sopravvissuta siano legati alla brillantezza dei suoi critici, a partire dall'Umberto Eco su Franti, riportati a commento. Sconcertante sfortuna per un testo dall'influenza e dalla fortuna straordinarie. (Sofri)

Therefore, classics for children seem to undergo a process of rewriting and rereading even in their own source culture where they are adapted to changes in history, poetics, cultural expectations, and market trends, among others.

Yet, going back to O'Sullivan's observation about classics for children as a 'market phenomenon', it is true that, due to the considerable changes that took place in this literature over more than a century, educational and literary institutions are not, at present, the only influential agents of canonisation of

²⁶ 'Si tratta anche per noi oggi di "rifare gli italiani" e di doverli rifare attraverso, insieme, la politica e la pedagogia, chiamando a raccolta anche (se pure ormai non soltanto: si pensi al ruolo che svolgono oggi i *media*) le istituzioni indicate da De Amicis (la famiglia, la scuola), ma andando, al tempo stesso, oltre di esse' (Cambi, "Rileggendo Cuore" 340).

children's literature. For instance, *Pinocchio* keeps a central position in different systems because each considers a specific feature of the book more important and central than others, and it directs its efforts towards exploiting that characteristic. Thus, in the literary system, Collodi's work is regarded as a classic mostly for its high linguistic standard and literary quality. In the education system, it is seen as the valuable product of an emergent and innovative pedagogical notion of the child as a pupil. And in the international market, it has turned out to be a best-seller. The book is comprised of all these qualities; we should consider the idea that at present we do not have a single *Pinocchio*, but many *Pinocchios*.

Piermarco Aroldi and Barbara Gasparini identify some of the strategies through which, from the source text of *Pinocchio*, many other different texts have been derived. They list at least nine types: 'traduzioni', 'attualizzazioni', 'filiazioni', 'continuazioni', 'merchandising', 'contaminazioni', 'parodie', 'citazioni', 'metapinocchio' (44-5). Each system seems to choose and reproduce its own *Pinocchio* and it becomes difficult to distinguish the single reason why this text is still so famous and widely read. In considering the multiple forms that a single literary text can acquire in different systems, it may be useful to look at the systemic position of canonised texts. According to Even-Zohar, who refers to literature in general,

...by "canonized" one means those literary norms and works (i.e., both models and texts) which are accepted as legitimate by the dominant circles within a culture and whose conspicuous products are preserved by the community to become part of its historical heritage. (15)

In Italian literature for children, the status of *Pinocchio* and *Cuore* clearly fits the above definition. As mentioned above, however, the fact that nowadays 'the dominant circles within a culture' vary and are not exclusively limited to the literary and educational system any longer, means that a different systemic approach should be considered. Given that Italian children's literature is a relatively young literary system, it can be said that its canonised portion (discussed above) has been preserved in the same form since it was first created, with the evident consequence that *Pinocchio* and *Cuore* are the only books for children mentioned in histories of Italian literature. According to such a concept of canon and of classics, the degree of mobility and innovation within this area of the Italian polysystem is very low and, since conservatism and stability are its most marked traits, new entries are hardly ever admitted into it, and a book rarely loses its status as a classic.

However, new tendencies have emerged as more than a century has passed since these 'classic' books were written, so the concept of classic may need to be revised. Philippe Codde finds that Even-Zohar's view according to which canonised

texts always occupy the centre of the polysystem is restrictive (103). Codde objects that a canonised text does not necessarily take a central position in the literary system; 'The canonical status of these models', he argues, is 'not at all related to a central, influential position in the literary system' (103). He considers the possible options resulting from the combination of Even-Zohar's dichotomic pairs 'centre versus periphery' and 'canonised versus non canonised'. An element may thus be canonical and central, canonical and peripheral, non-canonical and central or non canonical and peripheral. Codde makes a distinction, using

the term *canonized* for those items—texts and models—that enjoy or enjoyed cultural prestige, while the term *central* would refer to those texts and models that, at a certain point in time, influence the production of new texts. (104)

Codde's alternative theory is particularly applicable to children's literature, both as a set of indigenous texts as well as in translation. I would suggest adapting his model in order to account for the category of modern best sellers for children, and for their position in the system, because it makes it easier to take into account forces such as mass-market culture. In this respect, *Pinocchio* would come to represent the case of both a canonised and a central best-seller, while *Harry Potter*, for instance, would be a text which is central, but not canonised.

The publication of J.K. Rowling's saga has boosted the production of new texts of the same genre, but her book has not entered the canon because, at least for now, institutions such as academia and the school have not recognised it as prestigious in terms of literary merit.

The traditional idea of children's classics is still more likely to overlap with the centre of the literary and educational systems. One of the reasons for this is that, as O'Sullivan states, some classics for children, coming from adult literature (132), have already been acknowledged by the main literary system and, being recognised as 'high' literature, are also deemed to be valid didactic tools.²⁷ Each system which hosts children's literature regards as 'central' those books which display specific characteristics and fulfil specific functions, because they satisfy the primary expectations of the system. Thus, since expectations vary, there are works and models that, central in one system, do not hold the same position in others. For example, the Italian series of *Geronimo Stilton*, whose first episode was published in 2000 by Edizioni Piemme, is one of the current best sellers both in Italy and abroad.²⁸ These books have also been adapted into educational works for primary schools. Yet, within the academic literary system

²⁷ The rest of literature for children, according to O'Sullivan, is made of 'adaptations from traditional narratives and works of literature written specifically for children', and these texts, she adds, 'are often no more (and no less) than a market phenomenon' ("Comparative" 132).

²⁸ In the United States the rights of the story have been bought by Scholastic which also publishes *Harry Potter* for the American audience.

Geronimo Stilton is still relegated as of an inferior status and rarely singled out as the subject of serious attention. Whether this has to do with its recent publication or not, academic journals for instance consider it merely as a commercial product whose popularity is due more to an aggressive advertising campaign than to any literary merit.

Moreover, a possible explanation for the fact that the acknowledgement of a book for children as a classic comes from outside the system of literature for children is the disregard suffered by this body of literature in academia and more generally in official culture. The institutions that control the process of canon formation have often dismissed children's literature as inferior to their higher literary standards and have never been seriously committed to providing a specific canon of it. If the norms of this canon have never been established, one may wonder where, apart from literature for adults and the educational system, the criteria according to which some books for children are called 'classics' and are permanently present within the countless lists of 'what a child should read' come from. Therefore, the rules to conform to in order to acquire the status of 'classic' or 'best-seller' are formulated within systems in which children's literature is considered either a didactic tool, a sub-element or a product of the educational, the literary and the publishing systems respectively. The presence of children's literature in all these different systems, and the fact that each

tends to impose its norms and constraints upon it, complicate the creation of new rules based on modern research approaches. Should we then call for differentiated canons? Or for no canon, perhaps?

2. The Internationalism of Classics for Children

Internationally, although both *Cuore* and *Pinocchio* became known and have been translated into many different languages, it is especially the latter that more stably and widely entered the group of international classics. Piero Zanotto, referring to its worldwide success, claims that, in spite of the proliferation of a myriad of adaptations of dubious value, Collodi's work remains '...universale. Indistruttibile. Abbracciante i valori del mondo. Senza più data. Come fosse sempre esistito' (195). The fact that this book has a place on the bookshelves of children of different nationalities all over the world, and that a great deal of ink has been used to celebrate what *Pinocchio* represents for children's literature and culture, certainly nurtured the belief in the universality of the story of Collodi's puppet. Yet, it seems that the same interest is not directed towards the way in which this celebrity has actually been achieved and propagated.

Translation Studies reveals how the transfer of books for children from one system into another is not at all a 'natural' transaction. In order to be accepted by target cultures and become popular in other countries, these texts have frequently

undergone many interventions and changes. It has been especially O'Sullivan's comparative approach to children's literature that has offered an alternative perspective on internationalism: for him, the tendency to consider books for children as innate transnational products hinders any modern comparative approach to them as objects of research, and it is also incompatible with any study which seeks to investigate processes that take place between cultures ("Comparative", 1). Thus, internationalism, which at first appeared to be a positive element for the dissemination and development of research in literature for children across cultural boundaries, has revealed itself as a limitation.

The assumed universality of classics for children first emerged as an idealistic concept in Paul Hazard's work *Les livres, les enfants et les hommes*, published in 1932. The French scholar claimed that some specific characteristics of 'the universal republic of childhood', such as its respect for different nationalities and their writers, the fact that it displayed 'less vanity' compared to adult literature, and its high 'sense of humanity', allow books for children to overcome barriers between cultures. International exchanges would be facilitated, then, by the fact that what keeps children and their books apart (linguistic and cultural differences), however undeniable, is weaker than what unites them (146):

Smilingly the pleasant books of childhood cross all the frontiers; there is no duty to be paid on inspiration. Berquin walked about even in Hindustan, dressed in the fashion of that country. *Pinocchio* capers about in America. I have met *Little Red Riding Hood* in Mexico, in Brazil, in the Argentine, in Chili; Andersen is everywhere. (147-8)

Hazard was also the first international scholar to celebrate *Pinocchio* and *Cuore*²⁹ (119-20), the Italian children's classics *par excellence*. This kind of internationalism evidently drew on an idealised image of childhood: children are 'happy beings' (2) who have been oppressed for centuries by didactic literature imposed by adults, but have eventually risen up and claimed their right to choose the books they like (47). Hazard's view was heavily affected not only by a specific idea of childhood, but also by a more traditional comparative approach and by the absence at the time of any established research tradition on literature for children. Modern children's literature studies have mostly rejected this idealistic view. Maria Nikolajeva, for example, directly refuses this kind of internationalism:

The notion that there is a "common" children's literature in all countries in the world is a misunderstanding. The idea of touchstones of children's literature, popular in the United States and widespread

²⁹ According to Hazard, *Pinocchio* represents the 'Italy of yesterday'. He refers to the period before the First World War while, on the contrary, 'the Italy of today is vehement and bellicose. She is oratorical and always has been; but her eloquence has taken on a vibrant and moving quality that keeps the people in a state of exaltation. She has made a doctrine of force' (119). He defines *Cuore* as 'imbued with Italianità and above everything else this book for children is a breviary of patriotism' (120).

elsewhere, is ethnocentric. With very few exceptions, children's literature in different countries has little in common. (43)

A new concept of internationalism has recently matured with the changes occurred in the international exchange of children's books due to globalisation. According to O'Sullivan, at the moment, we are experiencing a second stage of this '...internationalism, this time not as an idealistic postulate but as the result of global market forces' (1). In the shift from the first to the second stage, the flattening of linguistic and cultural differences changes from being only ideal, to become practical.

Since the 1960s, great progress has been made in research about children's literature in translation especially thanks to expanding academic interest in the fields of comparative literature and Translations Studies. However, children's literature studies (to a different extent according to different national literatures) still pays little attention to the aspect of translated children's literature concerning classics in particular, and this may be due to the mistaken belief that the target text shares the same attributes as the source text, despite the fact that they have been produced within different cultural contexts:

...the prevailing concept of this literature is still predominantly internationalistic. Foreign texts are often read in their translations...and then discussed as if they had originally been written

in those languages...Furthermore, theoretical works on children's literature very seldom cross linguistic borders. (O'Sullivan, "Comparative" 11)

Where there has been any, attention has focused prevalently on linguistic-based differences between source texts and translations. The tendency to ignore cultural diversity among books for children has slowed down the penetration of Translation Studies within this field. Analytical works on the modes of transmission (different kinds of translations, adaptations, rewritings, etc.) through which classics for children have become known outside their countries of origin are still matters relegated only to Translation Studies. Questions about what these works have actually meant for the cultures into which they have been transferred, and what kind of reaction their international diffusion has produced back in the source cultures, are issues that children's literature studies still mostly neglect.

The next section will focus on the Italian classic for children *Pinocchio* in order to explore different aspects of the phenomena described above. Firstly, I will deal with one of the most predictable consequences of internationalism, namely the fact that classics for children in translation are mainly treated as indigenous literature in target cultures. This happens not only because they are perceived as 'universal' literary objects, but especially because they are often manipulated in order to

conform to that culture. By failing to notice some mechanisms of transfer and development of this literature, this outlook, inevitably undermines a thorough understanding of indigenous literature. Secondly, a less predictable consequence of internationalism is considered here: classics for children are subject to retranslation and rewriting in order to adapt them to changes in poetics, expectations and readers' taste not only in the target cultures, but also in their own source cultures.

2.1 *Pinocchio* between Italy and the USA

The first American translation of *Pinocchio* was published in 1892 by Cassell of New York, based on the English version translated one year before in London by Mary Alice Murray for Fisher Unwin. Since then, and with varying fortunes, Collodi's book has been issued in the US in a number of different translations, the most known among the early ones being those by Walter Cramp (1904), Joseph Walker (1909) and Carol Della Chiesa (1925). According to Richard Wunderlich and Thomas Morrissey:

Pinocchio in English rendition tells us about North American society, its change over time, and the change in its perception of children...Hence, Pinocchio, the original, designed to tell us something about ourselves individually, in adaptation over time, tells us something about ourselves collectively. (XV)

Wunderlich and Morrissey's research attempts to understand, through the analysis of the American translations of *Pinocchio*, some aspects of the American target culture. This is possible because, for many reasons, children's books in translation represent the cultures into which they are transferred to a greater extent than the source culture.³⁰ That characteristic mostly derives from the status of this body of literature and from some of its specificities that are largely reflected in the way children's books are translated.

Regarding the status of children's literature, Shavit claims that the work of the translator of books for children is greatly affected by the inferior position of this literature in the cultural system in which:

Unlike contemporary translators of adult books, the translator of children's literature can permit himself great liberties regarding the text...That is, the translator is permitted to manipulate the text in various ways by changing, enlarging, or abridging it or by deleting or adding to it. (112)

Translated children's books seek a high degree of acceptability by submitting to the specific didactic and pedagogic principles of the target culture (Puurinen 57). This observation is also linked to the functionalistic tendency of literature for children for which different modes and forms of transmission

³⁰ See Chapter One.

(abridgements, adaptations and rewritings) and their combinations aim at pursuing different purposes in the target culture and at satisfying specific audiences' needs. Klingberg claims that

...there are two pedagogical goals which can cause a revision of the original. One is the aim of giving the readers a text that they can understand....Another pedagogical goal of children's books may be thought to be to contribute to the development of the readers' set of values. (10)

Therefore, any alterations of the source text usually originate from concerns about the target reader and the suitability of the content according to norms (pedagogical, moral and financial) that operate in the target culture. Moreover, since pedagogic and moral criteria are culturally bound issues that vary considerably from one culture to another, protective and often censorious attitudes towards children have often prevailed over the view that any cultural and intellectual development is achieved through the knowledge of diversity. This has consequently increased freedom in terms of cuts, additions, adaptations, abridgements and bowdlerisations. *Pinocchio* represents a telling example of that, and thus is one of the main reasons why this text was chosen as an example.

Morrissey and Wunderlich's is one of those studies that have showed how Collodi's masterpiece has very often been modified in order to be transferred into different cultures. Their research shows how the *Pinocchio* loved by North American readers does not match the one born from Collodi. Reasons behind the development of the puppet's 'multiple personality' are found in the many changes that the story has undergone over time, through translations and adaptations, since its first publication in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century. This process has followed and reflected the transformation of American society, namely changes in politics and culture, such as the acquisition of new social values and behaviours, and the modification of the idea of childhood (Morrissey and Wunderlich 35-6). For instance, in an age when '...children were perceived as naturally good, and when they became bad or grew up bad it was because of corrupting outside forces, like bad surroundings', it is not entirely surprising that some episodes, like the one in which Pinocchio bites off one of the cat's paws, should be deleted as violent (96).

According to Wunderlich and Morrissey, most of the rewritings of *Pinocchio* have deprived the readers of 'the seminal complexity', 'erudite but readily accessible humor, homespun wisdom, and zest for life' (2-5) of the source text to return a different, simplified and neutral story. Their argument,

demonstrated through the analysis of a massive corpus of translations and adaptations, brings them to declare their great surprise and perplexity at finding out that versions of *Pinocchio* closer to the source text, in terms of adequacy, are given less and less space in the publishing market (196).

The Disney movie of *Pinocchio*, issued in 1940, seems to represent this phenomenon effectively. The nature of some of the characters of Collodi's story and parts of the plot were modified by Walt Disney and by his animators. This happened not only in order understandably to adapt the literary work to the filmic medium, but also because some elements of the book were not regarded as sufficiently appealing to the American audience. Thus, for example, the image itself of the character of Pinocchio was radically transformed. In Enrico Mazzanti's Italian original illustrations Pinocchio is drawn as a proper puppet; he is as ligneous and rigid as a marionette. Contrastingly, Disney's cartoonists created a child-like, rounder and more immediately likeable new character and also endowed him with a different personality: the naughty, undisciplined and often arrogant puppet invented by Collodi became an innocent child, the naïve victim of sly and unscrupulous types. Other characters were also modified. For example, the insect Jiminy Cricket was anthropomorphised, the Blue Fairy's attitude softened to be made more motherly, and the shark that swallowed Geppetto became a whale. The movie

ended up offering a reassuring and comforting version of Collodi's original.

A consoling and heartening tale, however, seemed not to be what Collodi had in mind when he wrote his story. He inserted a strong entertaining component in the book, challenging the established idea of the child, and made a mockery of the didactic intent prevailing in coeval children's literature. When Pinocchio, in the twenty-seventh chapter, starts a fight, his schoolmates violently throw schoolbooks at him: '...cominciarono a scagliare contro di lui i *Sillabari*, le *Grammatiche*, i *Giannettini*, i *Minuzzoli*, i *Racconti del Thouar*, il *Pulcino della Baccini* e altri libri scolastici' (*Pinocchio* 185). And further,

Figuratevi i pesci! I pesci, credendo che quei libri fossero roba da mangiare, correvano a frotte a fior d'acqua; ma dopo avere abboccata qualche pagina o qualche fronetespizio, la risputavano facendo con la bocca una certa smorfia, che pareva volesse dire: "Non è roba per noi: noi siamo avvezzi a cibarci molto meglio!". (186)

These lines have been read as a criticism expressed by Collodi against the pedantic didacticism common to most of the books adopted by Italian schools at the end of the nineteenth

century.³¹ Moreover, the anarchic side of children was openly shown for the first time in Italian children's literature.

Given the groundbreaking impact of *Pinocchio* on Italian children's literature and culture, it seems of great interest here to understand how the original text, written in 1883, has been preserved through time and in which forms it is still read today in its own source culture. It might be, for instance, that the phenomena described above about the American translations of *Pinocchio* are not only observable in its interlingual translations, but also in its intralingual ones, and that the distance between the original and more recent versions is in many cases equally wide in Italy.

The history of Italian intralingual translations of the story over time shows how the great appeal and popularity of the character have often been exploited to make the text convey other messages and assume different functions. It was not long after 1883 that the so called 'Pinocchiate' (continuations of the book) began to be published. Among many others, *Il figlio di Pinocchio* (Pinocchio's son) by Oreste Boni was published in 1893, Gemma Mongiardini's *Il segreto di Pinocchio* (Pinocchio's Secret) in 1894, and *Il fratello di Pinocchio* (Pinocchio's brother) by Ettore Griselli in 1898, among many others. In these sequels, the character of Pinocchio finds himself undertaking new adventures and meeting new

³¹ Collodi's irony is well expressed here: two of his books, *Giannettino* (1877) and *Minuzzolo* (1878) are also among those rejected by fish as indigestible.

characters. The extreme case of manipulation is represented by the use that political propaganda made of Collodi's work with the publication of books like *Pinocchio in Africa* (1903), *Pinocchio Fascista* (1924), *Pinocchio fra i balilla* (1927) and *Pinocchio istruttore del Negus* (1938)³², among others. In these cases, the puppet was completely enslaved to ideological goals in order to reach general consensus around the colonialist campaign or the Fascist regime. *Pinocchio fra i balilla*, for example, was used to promote the fascist youth association of *balilla* to youngsters, while *Pinocchio istruttore del Negus*, set in Ethiopia, supported the colonial campaign of Mussolini in Africa. Pinocchio is here presented as a proper fascist, and native Africans and communists are depicted as the victims of his mischievous behaviour.

Those above are the earliest Italian examples of *Pinocchios* that were adapted to new expectations, norms, and audiences. As already mentioned, it is very difficult to establish definite boundaries between adaptations, rewritings and other forms of translation, even more so if one deals with classics for children as texts that often combine written and visual text. Do changes in illustrations and words always occur in parallel? Many contemporary *Pinocchios*, while reproducing the written text of the original, do not keep the same illustrations, not to

³² Cherubini, Eugenio. *Pinocchio in Africa*. Firenze: Bemporad, 1903. Petri, Giuseppe. *Pinocchio fascista*. Firenze: Nerbini, 1924. Schiatti, Gino. *Pinocchio fra i balilla*. Firenze: Nerbini, 1927. Anonimo. *Pinocchio istruttore del Negus*. Firenze: Marzocco, 1938.

mention intersemiotic translations that make use of media such as, for instance, television, cinema and comics in which the visual effect acquires more centrality than the written text. For this reason, and to recognise some general trends of the phenomenon of rewriting *Pinocchio* in its source culture, I will look at some of its latest translations and re-editions published in Italy paying attention to both the visual and the verbal dimension of each text.

In an interview, Enzo D'Alò, the director of a new animated version of *Pinocchio*³³ which is expected to be released in 2012, describes his endeavour to recreate a *Pinocchio* 'made in Italy', namely more faithful to the original spirit of Collodi's story. He believes that today, more than seventy years after the issue of the Disney cartoon and despite the fact that not much of the original was left in that version, *Pinocchio* remains associated with that American version to a great extent.³⁴ In a review of Roberto Piumini's adaptation of *Pinocchio* with illustrations by Lucia Salemi addressing four to six year old children for the publisher Einaudi, the opinion expressed is very similar: the reviewer asks whether it is still possible to retell the story of the puppet to young children

³³ This is a co-production of Italy, France, Luxembourg and Belgium with the illustrations of Lorenzo Mattotti and with the soundtrack by Lucio Dalla.

³⁴ 'Abbiamo tutti nell'immaginario il "Pinocchio" della Disney, che è un film bellissimo, ma che di italiano ha molto poco e quindi io raccolsi questa sfida...' (occhisulcinema.it).

without missing its magic or being forced to rely on the cartoon.³⁵

These comments are only a few amongst many others that illustrate how strong the impact of the Disney filmic version still is on the collective imagination, even in Italy. As a reaction, many Italian authors, illustrators, directors, animators tend to point out their distance from the American version in the attempt to restore a direct link with Collodi's original. The tendency of many contemporary intralingual translations to re-establish close links with the original text is contrasted by a massive presence of the Disney version and by rewritings that are similar to it. On the other hand, an intermediate trend is represented by those intralingual translations of *Pinocchio* that either differ from both the previous tendencies by creating something completely original, or combine them together by producing versions with which the reader feels somehow familiar, but that are in many respects different from the original (for instance, there are versions that are transposed to a different medium³⁶ or that keep the original written text, but offer new illustrations).³⁷

By focusing the attention on the age and level of expertise of the addressee, one can think of an imaginary axis whose two extremes are represented by an older and/or more specialised

³⁵ 'Si può raccontare la storia di Pinocchio, il complessissimo romanzo di Collodi, ai bambini piccoli senza perderne la magia e...senza ricorrere al cartone animato?' (edizioniel.com).

³⁶ Collodi, Carlo. *Pinocchio, il grande musical*. Regia Saverio Marconi. 2005

³⁷ Collodi, Carlo. *Pinocchio*. Ill Nicoletta Ceccoli. Milano: Mondadori, 2001.

audience and a very young one. The *Pinocchios* occupying the segment that tends towards the extreme of an older and/or more specialised addressee appear to be closer to Collodi's original; they usually reproduce the integral text of the original and the illustrations from the very first editions. These versions often provide the annotated text and a critical apparatus. Two examples are the edition of Collodi's works in the series *I Meridiani* by the publisher Mondadori³⁸ and the Einaudi edition of *Pinocchio* for the series *ET Classici*.³⁹ The latter is accompanied by an introduction by Stefano Bartezzaghi, a preface by Giovanni Jervis and an essay by Italo Calvino. These are usually considered as re-editions of the work, because they offer the original text enriched with extra-textual material and mainly target a readership of specialists.

If we look at the intermediate segment of the axis, the age range of the addressees is wider and includes both adults (though not necessarily specialists), young adults and older children from the age of eight and over. Also in terms of illustrations and textual choices, the variety of products is considerably larger. Many Italian artists and authors have, at some point in their careers, given their own interpretations of the adventures of the marionette. From Roberto Benigni (see fig. 1) to Jacovitti (see fig. 2), from comics to animation, these

³⁸ Collodi, Carlo. *Opere*. Milano: Mondadori, 1995.

³⁹ Collodi, Carlo. *Le avventure di Pinocchio. Storia di un burattino*. Torino: Einaudi, 2006.

rewriters have expressed their own artistic personality by representing Collodi's work through different media.

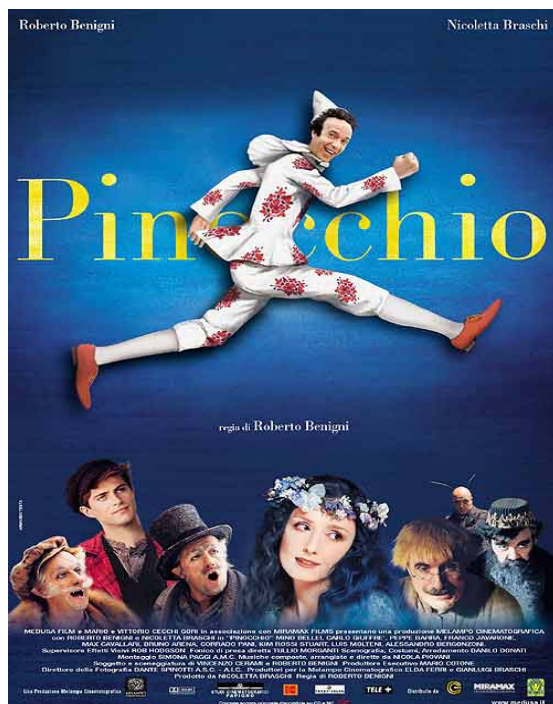


Fig. 1. Benigni, Roberto. *Pinocchio*. Medusa, 2002. (www.spietati.it)



Fig. 2. Carlo Collodi. *Pinocchio*. Jacovitti. A cura di Luca Boschi. Castiglione del Lago: Edizioni Di, 2007. (grifoedizioni.com)

Benigni's film for instance, released in 2002, addressed a large audience, ranging from adults to younger viewers. As much as the change of medium allows, Benigni's intersemiotic translation reproduced the original text without considerable omissions and changes of plot and dialogue. Amongst the many written versions, the *Pinocchio* by Fabbri Editore with illustrations by Lorenzo Mattotti published in 2001 (see fig. 3) represents another example of this category. The well-known Italian illustrator redraws the image of Pinocchio according to his own distinctive visual aesthetic.

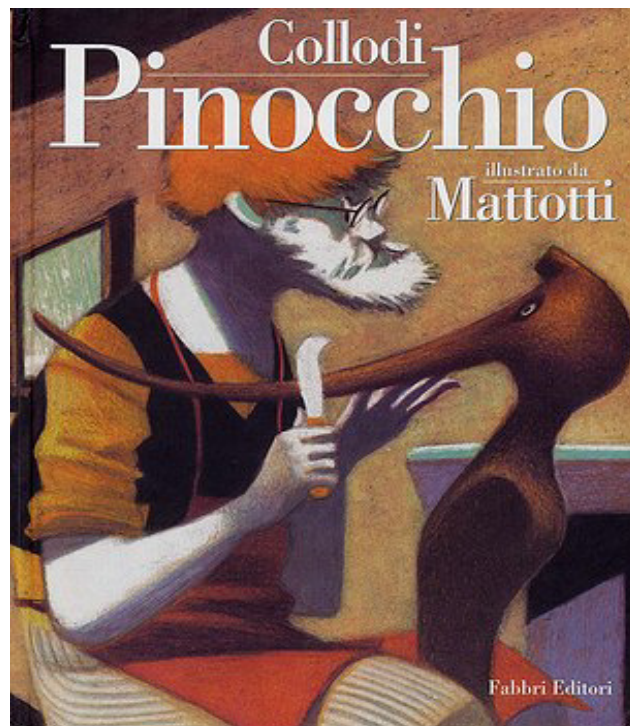


Fig. 3. Collodi, Carlo. *Pinocchio*. Ill Lorenzo Mattotti. Milano: Fabbri, 2001. (mattotti.com)

While the *Pinocchios* addressing an audience of eight year old children and older tend increasingly towards the original text, the lower the age of the addressee, the greater the simplification of both text and illustrations. Hence, in the segment of the axis closer to the lower end of the spectrum, where we find younger readers, we can situate the Disney translations (interlingual and intersemiotic), together with other Italian intralingual versions that show a similar degree of simplification. The most common intervention made in order to reduce the complexity of the text is abridgment: the episodes left are usually those considered as prototypical of the story of the puppet.

Fausto Colombo's analysis of ten different audiovisual versions of *Pinocchio*, both Italian and foreign, led him to observe recurrent patterns and to recognise three main source texts of those intersemiotic translations: Collodi's original, the Disney's cartoon⁴⁰ and Luigi Comencini's television series (53).⁴¹ More specifically, the episodes kept are more or less repeatedly the same, episodes of violence are omitted (for instance, Pinocchio's biting off the cat's paw, or the shark swallowing Pinocchio) and while some characters are eliminated, new ones are created (for instance, Figaro the cat) (113-4).

⁴⁰ '...e' chiaro dall'inizio che la derivazione collodiana non è l'unico ceppo di tutte le versioni; si intuisce un altro ceppo nel Pinocchio disneyano, che a partire dal '40 modifica globalmente un'immagine complessiva di riferimento' (96).

⁴¹ The television series in five episodes broadcasted by RAI in 1972.

The Italian publisher Fatatrak offers books for three year old children and above. The series devoted to *Pinocchio* focuses on specific characters and episodes: *Pinocchio e Mangiafuoco*, *Il gatto e la volpe*, *Pinocchio e il cane Melampo*,⁴² *Pinocchio e la balena* (see fig. 4). In the latter, the shark is substituted for a whale (la balena). The character of the whale is not present in Collodi's original, and it was inserted in the plot for the first time by Walt Disney. At a visual level, characters lose the ligneous features of the first illustrations and assume more rounded marks in order to resemble child-like drawings.

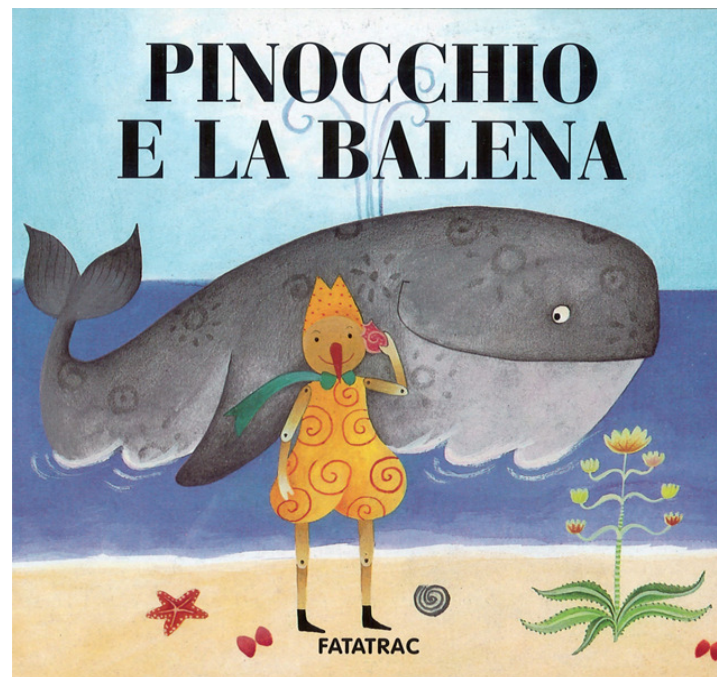


Fig. 4. Collodi, Carlo. *Pinocchio e la balena*. Ill. Sophie Fatus. Firenze: Fatatrak, 1995. (Fatatrak.com)

⁴² Codignola, Nicoletta. *Pinocchio e Mangiafuoco*. Ill. Sophie Fatus. Firenze: Fatatrak, 2007. Codignola, Nicoletta. *Pinocchio, il gatto e la volpe*. Ill. Sophie Fatus. Firenze: Fatatrak, 1997. Codignola, Nicoletta. *Pinocchio e il cane Melampo*. Ill. Sophie Fatus. Firenze: Fatatrak, 2007.

Most of the *Pinocchios* of different series⁴³ devoted to children from two to four by publisher Joy Book, on the other hand, clearly adopt the Disney version as their source model. The length of the story is extremely reduced with an average number of pages between fourteen and twenty. As a result, the plot is highly simplified and mainly focuses on specific episodes and characters. The parts kept are those in which Pinocchio deals with the most well known characters, namely Geppetto, the Talking Cricket, Mangiafuoco, the Fox and the Cat, the fairy, Candlewick, the cat and the goldfish. Due to the need to address children of preschool age, the reduction of the text appears understandable. However, emphasis often falls on characters that have acquired popularity especially due to the Disney version. Thus, for instance, the cat and the goldfish do not play any central role in the original *Pinocchio*: while the cat is briefly mentioned, the fish does not appear at all. The closeness between these versions and the Disney ones is even more evident at a visual level. The figure of Pinocchio clearly resembles that of the famous cartoon (see fig. 5). Superficial details can change (the character's clothes or his facial features, for instance), but the paternity remains obvious.

⁴³ *I giocallibri, Le più belle fiabe di tutti i tempi, C'era una volta, Favole sagomate, Pop-up.*



Fig.5. Collodi, Carlo. *Pinocchio*. Rimini: Joy Book, n.d. (libreriauniversitaria.it)

By looking at mechanisms of simplification and adaptation of the text used to address a younger audience through illustrations, it seems possible to see more evidently what these versions have in common. The *Pinocchio* published by Edizioni del Borgo for the series *Il Giocalibri* (see fig. 6), for instance, addresses children from the age of three. On the cover, a number of elements reveal the affinities between this adaptation and the Disney one: Pinocchio's image resembles that of a child more than that of a wooden puppet; the characters in the foreground are the cat, the fairy, the goldfish and Geppetto.



Fig. 6. Collodi, Carlo. *Pinocchio*. Casalecchio di Reno: Edizioni del Borgo, n.d. (edizionidelborgo.it)

Similarly, in the *Pinocchio* of the series Gira la Fiaba published by Edibimbi for two year old children and over, the figure of Pinocchio is hardly distinguishable from the American one.

Other *Pinocchios* offered by the same publisher present slightly different illustrations. The series *Quadrottini* (see fig. 7), for instance, seems closer to a famous Japanese cartoon showed in Italy in the 1980s (see fig. 8).



Fig. 7. Collodi, Carlo. *Pinocchio*. Milano: Edibimbi, n.d.
(shop.edicart.it)



Fig. 8. *Piccolino no bōken*. Nippon Animation, 1976. (digilander.libero.it)

Apart from *Pinocchio. Le mie fiabe*⁴⁴ in which Pinocchio clearly resembles a wooden puppet, the remaining versions show the marionette with features closer to those of a child.

⁴⁴ Collodi, Carlo. *Pinocchio. Le mie fiabe*. Milano: Edicart, 2011.

Although interventions made on a text written more than a century ago in order to address contemporary children between three and eight may be considered in most cases as necessary, many criticise the commercial exploitation of *Pinocchio* and the aggressive merchandising of the character as a product. The adaptation of *Pinocchio* made by Disney, first through the release of the animated movie in 1940 and, afterwards, through its book-form versions, is still one of the best-sellers amongst the different translations of Collodi's work in Italy. According to Aroldi, Disney has favoured the passage of *Pinocchio* from the 'text' dimension to the 'thing' dimension: toys and gadgets, though detached from the text, still 'refer' to a powerful story (169).

According to many other scholars such as O'Sullivan and Jack Zipes, the core of the source text seems not to have survived through the myriad of adaptations for young children and the Disney version of the book. The original *Pinocchio* does not coincide with the ludic text that contemporary children know. This kind of transmission takes place, according to O'Sullivan, through the mode of 'written folklore'. This mode aims at satisfying requirements such as a more pliable use of the work and greater tolerance in introducing changes at any level ("Comparative" 159-60).⁴⁵ This has also undermined the idea of the original author as the only authoritative source and

⁴⁵ The alternative mode is that of 'literary translation' and it '...represents a serious attempt to recreate the original text on its own terms. It tries not to add, subtract or alter the narrative' ("Comparative" 159-60).

has brought approval for the functionalistic use of the book in many different ambits such as didactically, socially, and in entertainment.

Gianfranco Bettetini believes that the ahistorical character of the story of *Pinocchio* has facilitated its internationalisation and has made it root into different cultures through different adaptations and derivative texts that have acquired great popularity (11-12). He considers Disney's version as '...uno dei piu' importanti "trasformatori" dei contenuti e dei valori immanenti al romanzo e, di conseguenza, uno dei testi che piu' hanno contribuito alla diffusione di una sua immagine in buona parte "diversa" rispetto a quella originale' (11-12).

The examples given above show to what extent Disney's adaptation of *Pinocchio* has impacted on some recent Italian versions, and how it has acquired the status of a 'model', in particular, for many of the adaptations that address a very young audience today. Therefore, two things seem undeniable: adaptations for children tend to be simplified to a great degree, and Disney has done that successfully. The American cartoon, as well as its derivative books and gadgets, are amongst the first versions of *Pinocchio* to which very young children are exposed and this might contribute to make a lasting impression on them. In addition, a strong merchandising campaign constantly nourishes this particular figure of Pinocchio. Thus, it can be said that Disney offers a successful example of

intervention on the original text to make it suitable for younger children, and this is one of the reasons why Disney's translations have been able to influence other versions of *Pinocchio*, even in Italy.

The aim of this thesis is not to judge the value of translations with regard to the original, but to reflect upon and to pose questions about the complicated relationship between source texts and translations in the context of children's classics. Could we assume a point in which the former loses its *patria potestas* on its translations and adaptations? Could it be said, for instance, that other versions now represent alternative source texts to which the many *Pinocchios* offered to Italian children today have to be traced back? We could even go further, asking whether the survival of the myth of *Pinocchio* amongst children has been ensured thanks to different kinds of translations. The Disney version as well as other successful ones (the Japanese cartoon mentioned above, for example, or Benigni's movie) have offered Italian children different ways of approaching Collodi's story.

This is what Wunderlich and Morrissey have ultimately noticed about the reception of *Pinocchio* in the United States:

When we first began to study *Pinocchio* two decades ago we were immediately impressed by the chasm between Collodi's novel and the flood of alternative *Pinocchios* that we encountered in bookstores everywhere, and from which our students and others seemed to have

formed their impression of the puppet and his story...even though good translations were readily available, we rarely encountered anyone who had actually read one of them. (XIII)

In the preceding pages, I have illustrated how the last statement of the above citation is also applicable to the Italian context and how, at present, adults as well as children come to know Collodi's work not only through the original, but especially through versions other than the source text published in 1883.

3. How do Adults Read Classics for Children in Italy Today? Some Examples

Currently, many critics and educators blame children for no longer reading classics in their integral form, and for being attracted by their adaptations or by other genres such as horror, fantasy and 'girlish' contemporary stories instead. Few interpret the trend from the child's viewpoint. Books are not entities detached from actuality and the same is true of children who, as individuals, live in a specific socio-cultural environment and are receptive to changes. The use of language, which is one of the main instruments adopted by young people to challenge their parents' generation, varies quickly in time, to catch up with progress in history, society and culture. According to Teresa Buongiorno, what has brought classics to lose their popularity and appeal among young people is exactly

their language, which evolves too slowly compared to that used by contemporary young people. This is the reason why, she adds, it is easier to approach a classic in translation, where language can be updated (“Cercando minimondi”).

Publishing houses re-evaluate classics by positioning them in different systems and exploiting multiple layers of meaning in order to meet a new audience. As a consequence, the operation of addressing a different readership has highlighted the increasing distance between translations of classics intended for children, which tend to be abridged and simplified according to the age of the implied reader, and those that address adults, which are meant to be more sophisticated and refined. Thus, while in the system of children’s literature originals gradually seem to lose their predominance over rewritings, they gain more ‘authority’ in the system of literature for adults.

As observed earlier in relation to *Pinocchio*, some translations of classics for children seem to have acquired, with time and for disparate reasons, such an authority compared to the source texts that they interpose themselves between the latter and its further translations. On the other hand, books that more than a century ago addressed young readers are now seen, in their integral versions, as ‘more appropriate’ for an adult audience, and tend to leave only a trace of themselves in children’s literature, through their adaptations. However, a

dynamic similar to that observed above regarding classics in the system of children's literature is also perceivable within the system of adult literature. The entry of classics for children into mainstream literature follows different paths. The tendency to keep the translation of these texts closer to the source text is not widespread and belongs mostly to a specific audience, usually related to academia. On the other hand, the phenomenon for which classics for children are adapted to genres and media of transmission that are more appealing to a wider audience seems to be more common.

In this section of the chapter, my examples will focus mostly on the latter trend. I will look at different examples of recent translations of classics for children, both Italian and foreign, in order to see to what extent the original is altered, what is retained or discarded, and which types of strategies are used to make a book originally written for children, more than one century ago, attractive to a present-day adult audience.

The literary phenomenon which implies 'the rewriting of a book for adults to turn it into a children's book and the reverse' (Kümmerling-Meibauer, "Crosswriting" 15) is also known as 'crosswriting'. These labels include books that are created to meet the audiences of young and adult readers concurrently, or those that, written at first with a child reader in mind, have later shifted to the system of literature for adults, or the other way around. For instance, if *Gulliver's Travels* offers a classic

example of a book originally written for adults which with time has been adapted also to become a book for children, Philip Pullman's fiction can be seen as an example of texts that appeal to different audiences at the same time. Referring specifically to British classics, Rachel Falconer observes how, during the last decade, the interest around them has been revived by the publication of new editions and adaptations through non-literary media such as television, cinema, theatre, etc., and directed to an adult audience (153). As regards Italian children's classics, the latter phenomenon has been at work for many decades. Thus, for instance, both *Pinocchio* and *Cuore* were adapted for television by the director Luigi Comencini, in 1972 and 1984 respectively. The latest appearance of *Pinocchio* in cinemas dates from 2002, with Roberto Benigni's version, which gave new vigour to the story of the puppet, turning it into the publishing phenomenon of the year with fourteen re-editions and a high number of adaptations and abridgements (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, "Produzione 1987-2008").

In 2000, a new project was submitted for the attention of the director of the third public Italian radio channel, Radio 3 Rai. The idea was an audio version of the monthly stories narrated in De Amicis' *Cuore*, rewritten by nine well-known Italian authors with an adult audience in mind. The proposal

sounded convincing and the radio program *Ric cuore*⁴⁶ was broadcasted in April 2001. The adaptation to a new medium and audience was carried out by adopting different strategies, including the localisation of the text, which implies a process of cultural adaptation and for which '[t]he whole cultural setting of the text is moved closer to the readers of the target texts' (Klingberg 18). In general, this operation not only involves a change of the historical or geographical setting, but also the insertion of hints and allusions to the target context. Genette's concept of 'transtextuality' as 'all that sets the text in relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts' (1) illustrates well all the different effects that this kind of intervention produces on the text.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, De Amicis' *Cuore* is considered, along with *Pinocchio*, a classic of Italian literature for children. While it seems that the international success of *Pinocchio* was mostly due to the strength of the plot and to the appeal of its characters, what was most appreciated in *Cuore* was the ideological message conveyed by the story. In particular, the stories told by the teacher to his students each month of the school year acquire a specific function in the text. They represent a 'tale within a tale' and each fulfils a moralising function. Stefano Tassinari, in his version of one of the chapters of the source text, "Valor Civile", imagines that the

⁴⁶ In 2005 the Italian publishing house Il Maestrato collected the stories in a book edited by Giosuè Calaciura et al.

main character, Enrico Bottini, returns to life in today's Italy and finds himself in the same place where, more than a century earlier, one of his schoolmates, Pinot, was awarded a medal of valour for having rescued a child from drowning. It is with great surprise that Enrico awakens in a world where the set of values with which he had been brought up, and that he was taught to respect at the end of the nineteenth century, has been completely reversed. A stranger he meets in a café tells him that since *Cuore* had been published for the first time, the world had changed, and people with it. What was then disapproved of and denounced as reprehensible is now praised and considered honourable. In this bizarre twenty-first century, a well known intellectual can write an essay in which the nasty character of Franti is depicted as a victim of social context and not as a culprit. Enrico protests: he is no more than a character who came out of De Amicis' pen. It is not his fault if the sentimentalism professed by *Cuore* now collides with reality, if the school has now become a place where an armed student kills teachers and classmates, if a person can be left drowning amongst the indifference of passers-by. The awards ceremony is held again, but this time the medal is given to the person who, in the same situation, has behaved according to new values. In a context which resembles the surrealist episode of Pinocchio's trial, public acknowledgement is received by the boy who, though present when his friend was drowning in the

river, pretended not to see him and did not give aid to him. The lord mayor says:

Devono sapere che la Storia li ha sconfitti, che non c'è più spazio per i sentimentalismi, per le utopie, per la solidarietà umana, per la giustizia sociale, tutte parole che in questo nostro nuovo mondo – dove il pensiero è finalmente unico e incontestabile – nessuno pronuncia più. (115-6)

In relation to the transformation of classics for children by translation as rewriting, adaptation or transmediation, we can observe that De Amicis' story is used here by Tassinari in order to interpret contemporary society and to find out whether the values proclaimed by De Amicis are still topical issues in current Italian social and political life. In this case, the operation of localisation is evident and constitutes the fulcrum supporting the whole narration. A less explicit way of 'localising' the text and adapting it to a different historical time is that of retelling the same story but enriching it with an intertextual network of references that makes the reader able to understand the narration as set in his/her own time, even though this is not stated explicitly. Thus, for example, in "Le piccole notti", based on the original story "Il piccolo scrivano fiorentino", twelve-year-old Giulio repeatedly gets up in the middle of the night to help his father with his work, while the latter is asleep in his bedroom, unaware of the nocturnal activities of his son. Every

night, Giulio sits at his father's desk and copies countless addresses on computer files. Every morning, his father cheers up at the idea of having been unexpectedly productive the evening before. This prolonged lack of sleep starts exhausting Giulio. He is unable to stay awake during school-time and his performance in the classroom becomes very poor. At home, the situation becomes upsetting as well because of the arguments Giulio has with his father who, still unaware of the reason behind his son's poor performance at school, keeps reprimanding him.

The plot of the story is exactly the same as in the source text, but the author, Enzo Fileno Carabba, in order to make it contemporary, introduces some elements that make explicit the shift to a modern setting. In this case, for example, the author inserts the element of the computer.

Una notte aspettò ch'egli fosse a letto, si vestì piano piano, ando'a tentoni nello stanzino, riaccese il lume a petrolio, sedette alla scrivania, dov'era un mucchio di fasce bianche e l'elenco degli indirizzi, e cominciò a scrivere, rifacendo appuntino la scrittura di suo padre. (De Amicis 95)

Ma ecco una notte cosa fece. Aspettò che il padre fosse andato a dormire. Quando i rumori si placarono si alzò senza respirare e – in pigiama e in punta di piedi – andò verso lo stanzino del computer. (Carabba 42)

Intertextuality is another strategy through which the operation of localisation is carried out. Thus, for example, Carabba permeates the story with a subtle element derived from horror stories: at night, while crossing the corridor which leads to his father's studio where the computer is located, Giulio is filled with fear of the 'creature affamate in agguato dentro i muri' (43).

The story "Isabel", by Matteo Galianzo, is based on one of the most well known 'monthly' stories, "Dagli Appennini alle Ande".⁴⁷ De Amicis' original protagonist, Marco, a Genoese boy who goes to South America in search of his mother, is substituted here by a South American boy who goes to Genoa for the same reason. Marco finds himself in an environment which is hostile to a wide community of immigrants that survives with difficulty. At the end of the nineteenth century, Italian immigrants suffered discrimination abroad; today the same happens to immigrants from South America, Eastern Europe and Africa who go to Italy in search of a job. The setting and characters are different, but the drama of these individuals is, more than a century on, still the same.

Since *Ricordo* is an intralingual translation, we might expect the procedures of localisation and actualisation to be less complex compared to those adopted for texts coming from a culture relatively distant from the target one. As an example

⁴⁷ Different movies have been based on this single episode of *Cuore*, the most well known of which appeared in 1943 and 1989.

of this second case, we can consider two different kinds of translation of *Alice in Wonderland*. Carroll's work has been one of the most successful classics to enter Italian children's literature in translation. The first Italian version was published in 1872, translated by Teodorico Pietrocola-Rossetti. It was a limited edition which did not have a wide circulation and was soon forgotten. In 1908, Emma Cagli's version became quite popular and clearly addressed child readers.⁴⁸ After Fascism openly banned *Alice* at the end of the 1930s, many years passed before, in the 1950s, several new translations were published. Gradually, though, these started addressing an adult audience.

One of the most recent Italian translations of Carroll's work was issued in 1993 and produced by the writer Aldo Busi. In Busi's words, *Alice* is neither exclusively a text for children nor for adults:

Un consiglio agli adulti: questo libro...è il più bello al mondo da leggere a un bambino. Voi lo aiuterete a capire il senso e lui vi aiuterà a captare il suono. Temo che da solo un adulto non possa farcela a fare entrambe le cose e, del resto, per un bambino l'ordinamento dei trabocchetti fonologici di Lewis Carroll è davvero troppo sistematico nel suo fare il verso a tutte le visibili certezze spacciate per verità dal linguaggio dei grandi. (6)

⁴⁸ See Chapter One.

Busi is certainly not an ‘invisible’ translator; his personal voice and style are clearly recognisable. This translation, which also offers the readers the source text, focuses on the linguistic register, trying to recreate the multilayered richness of the original through an attempt at reproducing it for the benefit of the Italian audience. In this case, the use of transtextuality, and in particular its subtype of intertextuality, is evident. The localisation of the translation is pursued through explicit references to the Italian context. For example, in translating ‘You are old, Father William’ in the fifth chapter, Busi inserts local elements.

“I have answered three questions, and that is enough,”
Said his Father. Don’t give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I’ll kick you down stairs!”. (72)

Ho risposto a tre domande, e mi giran come pale”
Fa papà. “Saputello, quante arie
che ti dai per qualche quiz, e oltretutto senza sale,
smamma, **Mike**, o ti cavo lingua e carie!”. (73) [added emphasis]

Here ‘Mike’ refers to Mike Bongiorno, a renowned television quiz presenter in Italy. Elsewhere, the Queen of Hearts’ tarts of the eleventh chapter become ‘pizzette’ (163), the ‘Turtle Soup’ song is transformed in ‘Il Brodo delle Star’ (157), referring to the famous *brodo Star*, an Italian stock-cube brand. The chorus ‘Wow! wow! wow!’ (88) of the song sung by the Duchess in the

sixth chapter becomes ‘Dadaumpa! Dadaumpa! Umpa!’ (89), like the chorus of a famous Italian song from the 1960s.

However high the degree of localisation might be in an interlingual translation such as Busi’s, an intersemiotic translation also involves the change of the medium of transmission and thus a more evident effort of adaptation. In 2005, the Italian actress Lella Costa wrote the monologue *Alice* and performed it in Italian theatres.⁴⁹ The process of localisation of place and time is in this case more radical compared to *Riccuore* and Busi’s *Alice*. Costa’s *Alice* has been written in order to be expressed through a medium different from that of the source text, and it clearly addresses an audience other than children. The distance from the child reader is accentuated both by the choice of the medium of transmission and by the deep intertextuality of the text, built on allusions to other texts, current events and adult culture of the target cultural system. In the introduction to the written version of the monologue (a further translation), Costa claims that she has tried to focus on two main themes of Carroll’s work, namely ‘l’infanzia e il tempo’.

Ecco, forse è questo: quando ci spiegano che i classici sono nostri contemporanei, be’, forse vuol dire questo. Vuol dire che cose scritte cento, duecento, cinquecento anni fa non solo ci piacciono ancora oggi, ci coinvolgono e ci interessano, ma sembra proprio che ci

⁴⁹ In 2008 the publishing house Feltrinelli collected three of her monologues in the book *Amleto, Alice e La Traviata*.

riguardino. A volte che ci descrivano come siamo oggi, come siamo diventati adesso. In questo senso forse *Alice* è un libro speciale. (87)

Costa's intervention consisted in singling out specific elements and themes of the source text and building a different text around them. According to Esin Gören, whose study specifically refers to *Pinocchio*, in these kinds of translations, Pinocchio represents '...un archetipo presente nella nostra memoria collettiva che è stato riscritto innumerevoli volte a causa della adattabilità in nuove storie del suo contenuto, manipolandolo nel tempo e nello spazio' (137). Costa also seems to keep the archetype of *Alice* by selecting from the original text those aspects that are closer to her sensibility as an artist. As with Busi's translation, here the personality of the 'translator' is very visible. Costa is known to be a strong advocate of women's rights and she makes *Alice* talk directly to present day women:

Se sbaglia non ha paura di riprovare, è piena di energia, piena di risorse, piena di qualità eppure in ogni situazione si sente sempre e comunque

INADEGUATA!

O troppo alta, o troppo bassa,

le dici magra, si sente grassa,

son tutte bionde, lei è corvina,

vanno le brune diventa albina.

Troppo educata, piaccion volgarì!

Troppo scosciata per le comari!
 Sei troppo colta e preparata,
 intelligente e qualificata,
 il maschio è fragile, non lo umiliare,
 se sei più brava non lo ostentare!
 Sei solo bella ma non sai far niente,
 guarda che l'uomo oggi è esigente,
 l'aspetto fisico più non gli basta,
 cita Alberoni e butta la pasta...
 Alice piange, trangugia, digiuna,
 è tutte noi,
 è se stessa,
 è nessuna. (79)

The literary tools employed by Carroll, such as rhymes, nonsense and satire, are used here in order to reread the present and to tackle issues closer to the translator's sensibility. One and a half centuries later those means are still effective:

Certo, la cosa che sembra incredibile è come gli stessi personaggi di allora possano continuare ad adattarsi a ogni situazione, a ogni regime, a ogni epoca. Eppure è letteralmente così, ancora oggi funzionano alla perfezione. Anche perchè quale paese al mondo non ha mai avuto un cappellaio matto che si mette a farsi le leggi su misura? Un re degli scacchi, piccolo, tronfio, pavido e malevolo? Un sorriso senza niente intorno? Un tipo tracotante che paga le parole

per fargli dire quello che vuole lui?...Se mai, più raro è trovarseli tutti concentrati in una persona sola.... (87)⁵⁰

Conclusion

The first part of this chapter has represented a challenge to the notion that classics for children, by representing universal values, can cross cultural borders without effort. Such an assumption represents a superficial analysis of the genre and is further proof of the weak penetration of Translation Studies in the domain of children's literature studies. If classics for children possess any common trait it seems that this consists in being continuously adapted to different cultures and readerships. Thus, the fact that they spread worldwide does not depend on any intrinsic characteristic but on all the changes effected in order to fit different target contexts: they have travelled across systemic boundaries, have been transformed, and have assumed new identities.

The assumption of the universality of classics prevents us from paying proper attention to the reasons why they are still among us and from understanding that it is exactly their dynamism that has assured them this kind of 'immortality'. The stories they tell are certainly powerful, but only some elements could survive through time. Translation Studies reveals how

⁵⁰ Costa alludes to the actual Prime Minister of the Italian government, Silvio Berlusconi, elected in 2008.

these mutations depend on the target contexts in which classics are transferred, on the historical period in which they are recreated, as well as on the translators/rewriters and the implied readers. The examples taken from the American translations of *Pinocchio* and the new versions of Collodi's work circulating today in its country of origin have illustrated how the relationship between source texts and their translations is a complex and mutable one. The cases referring to the shift of classics from children's literature to the system of adult literature, on the other hand, have shown which kind of products are derived from those interventions, and what remains of the source texts.

These transformations have produced a great variety of texts, more or less immediately recognisable as derived from 'originals'. For example, the variety of ways in which classics for children are rewritten today in order to meet an adult readership is huge. Intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translations of books, and combinations of those approaches, flood the shelves of bookshops with products that are difficult to classify and to contain within strict definitions. In this respect, the broader concept of translation I have adopted in this chapter seems able to embrace all these variants, but certainly there exists the prospect of an even more intensified blurring of the distinctions between single phenomena and texts.

Where this chapter has mainly looked at texts, the following chapter will focus on the figures of some Italian women translators of children's literature. It proceeds from late nineteenth century, the time when classics for children were created in Italy as well as imported into the country, and develops throughout the early twentieth century.

Chapter 3

Women Writers and Translators of Children's Literature in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century

Introduction

Sherry Simon states that '[t]ranslators and women have historically been the weaker figures in their respective hierarchies: translators are handmaidens to authors, women inferior to men' (1). The subordination ascribed to women in society and to children's literature and translation in culture has brought about, in the long term, the lack of regard and the concealment of the role played by female translators in the development of literature for children. Based on the assumption that children's literature is the 'Cinderella' of the literary world, a world in which literature for adults predominates, and inspired by Simon's observation on the inferiorisation of both translators and women, this chapter will focus on the work of some women translators of children's literature in Italy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The purpose of this exercise will be to delineate some traits of the figures of women translators of children's literature and understand their position and

achievements in the wider context of women writing children's literature.

At the closing of the nineteenth century in Italy, the number of published female writers increased considerably.⁵¹ However, they were not easily allowed into established literary circles, and their presence was tolerated only in genres such as popular fiction (Arslan 16) and children's literature. In other words, genres of 'lesser significance' were considered 'good enough' for them, Italian literature for children at the time consisting mainly of works regarded as suitable didactic tools or vehicles of moral instruction. The importation of foreign literature was a means by which children's literature could overcome pedagogic and ideological constraints, and encourage and stimulate the development of different ideas and literary modes in the target literature. However, for female translators, the path of translating children's literature was particularly difficult: being a woman was enough to have a writer regarded with scorn in the nineteenth century. Working in children's literature, either as writers or translators, would

⁵¹ 'È un' "infinita schiera di novellatrici" e di intellettuali, di giornaliste, di appendiciste e di poetesse, di educatrici, di favoliste e di scrittrici per l'infanzia, che costituiscono quella galassia sommersa, dai contorni, è vero, incerti e un pò ambigui ma dall'indubbio spessore quantitativo e anche qualitativo, che era percepita dai contemporanei come uno dei fenomeni più importanti dell'Italia umbertina. La letteratura femminile era infatti seguita con attenzione proprio perché giocava un suo ruolo, non solo e non tanto come "lettura d'evasione", ma come legittimo intervento di analisi e di denuncia sociale, operato da donne per cui la scrittura era diventata uno *status* professionale, e sulle quali l'interesse dei contemporanei si appuntava, anche considerandole in sé come personaggi pubblici, su cui riflettere e su cui discutere: esse in sostanza costituivano una "categoria sociale" a sé, con ben definite peculiarità e caratteristiche' (Arslan 43-4).

anchor these women to one of the lowest levels of the literary hierarchy, because it reinforced the bias according to which women were naturally disposed to work better in activities related to their intrinsic maternal role.

These constraints are well reflected in the approach to translation adopted by these women. It was through their hands that many foreign works and ideas entered Italian literature for children, and it was in their hands that translation ended up becoming an instrument. More or less deliberately, according to specific cases, these female translators used translation as a mode of communication and personal expression and as a tool of education directed at themselves and towards others by appropriating the end product of their endeavours. Although, through their work as translators, these women made a major contribution to Italian children's literature, particularly in the importation of foreign influences, one question that arises is whether a too-strong adherence to the social and literary constraints of the target culture, and especially of those pertaining to literature for children of the time, may have in some cases moderated, through translation, the innovativeness of the imported works.

In particular, this looks at the life and work of some women who gave impetus to the development of Italian indigenous and translated children's literature. In directing attention to a specific 'female' concept and practice of

translation, already signalled and explored by previous studies,⁵² I argue that this paradigm gains a further dimension when the variant of children's literature is included. Looking closely at the cultural, social and personal dynamics involved in the work of these translators allows us not only to add a chapter to the history of women translators, but critically to accept that attention to translation might tell the history of children's literature from an angle which differs from the established one.

Due to the breadth of this chapter, which encompasses indigenous Italian and translated children's literature from the second half of the nineteenth century until the advent of Fascism, it is clear that what follows cannot be, nor is it intended to be, an exhaustive study. Ideally, it should be a starting point. The examples have been mainly chosen to represent different genres and aspects of children's literature and its translation, in particular fables and poetry. Moreover, the fact that all the women chosen as case studies were also original writers, both for children and adults, makes it possible not only to explore different approaches on the production and translation of literature for children in Italy, but also to have a more variegated picture of the category of women intellectuals, writers and translators of the time, a subject so far largely neglected by researchers.

⁵² Vanessa Leonardi and Sherry Simon, among others.

It is helpful here to devote an introductory section to the historical and cultural context under scrutiny. In this section, examples such as that of Sofia Bisi Albini (1856-1919) will be presented. As an original writer and a translator, she contributed to make known among young readers a kind of literature inspired by foreign works such as Alcott's *Little Women*, that is a kind of narrative attentive to the psychology of the characters. She herself translated Montgomery's *Misunderstood* in 1902 and was the editor of magazines for young girls at the end of the nineteenth century, where both translation and the pen of a woman were welcome. Subsequently, two separate sections will focus on two women whose translations are still read by contemporary children. Firstly, a 'female' idea of writing and translating as a mode of communication, cultural transmission and instrument of education strongly emerges in the work of Maria Pezzè Pascolato (1869-1933), an educator, writer and translator whose translations of Andersen's and Hauff's tales constitute one of the examples. Secondly, the activity as a translator of the writer and children's poet Camilla Del Soldato (1862-1940) will serve to highlight how the important work of cultural mediation played by women who, through translation, brought new models into the target literary context of Italian literature for children, may have been somehow undermined by the need of these women to conform to a more conservative target

model and to the general social expectations of their time. The main stages of the growth of nonsense poetry in Italian literature and its role in children's literature will show how, as in many other cases of women translators and despite its groundbreaking importance, Del Soldato's contribution has been almost completely forgotten today.

Given the strong connection between translations and indigenous literature emphasised throughout this thesis, examples both of Italian writings for children and of other women intellectuals such as original writers will be included in order to gain a better understanding of the subject and of the historical and socio-cultural context in which women were working as writers of children's literature and as cultural mediators. This is also due to the concept of translation, according to which translations are products of the target culture.⁵³ Moreover, international studies on women writing and translating have been taken into account where relevant to the subject, recognising their different historical and geographical contexts as having comparative value.

⁵³ According to Toury's target-oriented approach on the study of translation: 'translations are facts of target cultures; on occasion facts of a special status, sometimes even constituting identifiable (sub)systems of their own, but of the target culture in any event' (29).

1. 'Between the necessity to assert and the need to apologise'⁵⁴: Female Writers and Translators of Children's Literature

As discussed in the previous chapters, nineteenth-century Italian books for children were heavily imbued with scholastic and moral didacticism. Intended mainly as schoolbooks, they pursued a marked pedagogical objective. Literature for children was then at the mercy of social and political changes; moreover, it was the reflection of the coexistent but contrasting main ideologies of those times, such as conservatism, liberalism, religious moral and new bourgeois social paradigms (Valeri 49).

After 1870, a change started to be gradually perceived, and a less authoritarian and more entertaining trend in narratives addressing children emerged. An opposite force to Italian culture's conservatism was exerted by freer and less conventional authors and by some magazines for children, both of which were also the main vehicles of translation. The last decades of the nineteenth century witnessed the flourishing of translations of books for children. Some of them considerably differed from the more traditional line of 'approved' texts, whose core was mostly didactic, and some others, though still morally instructive, imported a new kind of narrative into Italian

⁵⁴ The quotation is taken from Spacks (10).

literature for children. Thus, for example, the Italian market was enriched by the translations of works such as Florence Montgomery's *Misunderstood* (published in 1869 and translated in 1902), Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868/1908), *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1885/1887) by Frances Hodgson Burnett, *Heidi* (1881/1889) by Johanna Spyri, Hector Malot's *Sans Famille* (1878/1890) and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883/1883), most of which were translated by women.

At a time when the unification of the Italian State had only been recently completed, certain factors caused a considerable increase in the presence of women in children's literature. The fight against illiteracy started by the newly established Italian government weighed significantly on this: the *Legge Coppino* of 1877 raised the school leaving age from six to nine, imposing pecuniary fines on transgressors. The spread of texts in translation and the creation of a publishing sector intended exclusively for children also contributed to making many women, already formally linked to this context as teachers and educators, become the protagonists of this development (Bernardini Napoletano 16-9).⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Referring to the British context of the same period, Julia Briggs underlines very similar coincidental circumstances for which 'women began to take up writing as a profession at about the same time as books specifically written for children began to be published in any numbers' and while they 'were committed to the nursery world as mothers, nurses, or governesses in a way that few men were' (223).

From a positive viewpoint these circumstances gave Italian women the chance to assume a more decisive role in influencing choices in the children's sector of the publishing industry. However, to overlook the price many of them had to pay is to diminish the significance of the struggle that these women were involved in. Their lives were under the constant strain of balancing the conservative expectations of society, and a desire for innovativeness they wished to encourage as writers and especially as translators and cultural mediators. Their behaviour and thinking were affected by the tension between the institutional responsibility they bore as educators, teachers and moral guides to girls and women and, on the other hand, by the awareness of the need for change, specifically in literature for children, and in the condition of women in general:

...the late-nineteenth century was an extremely ambiguous period as regards the role of women in Italian society, and the serious woman writer, because of her high profile, was more sensitive than most to the contradictions and pressures created by contrasting social imperatives. On the one hand opportunities for self-expression were greater than they had ever been before and a variety of economic, political, social and literary forces were pushing women towards forms of consciousness that were profoundly threatening to the *status quo*. On the other hand, serious writing demanded a degree of self-exposure which not many women of the time were prepared to risk: self-exposure conflicted not only with established bourgeois norms of

feminine modesty, but also, as we shall see, with the specific Risorgimento image of woman as angel-of-the-heart, a myth all the more resistant because the family was considered the primary nucleus of the new Italy. This lingering image could not help but influence the female writer's sense of her place in society and tended to block any inclination toward confrontation. (Kroha, "The Woman Writer" 10)

In this overall picture, the activity of writing and translating literature for children was for women an interstitial zone between intellectual freedom and further binding to prevalent social expectations. Although their presence in the educational system situated female writers among the protagonists of the children's books market, their position as caretakers of education and moral development put them under continuous public scrutiny. Moreover, there was little credit granted for their literary achievements; indeed, the opposite was the case since the misconception that children's literature was less serious and significant than literature for adults was strongly entrenched.⁵⁶ These factors would then produce a series of dichotomies between different planes of activity. Original writers as well as educators, these women had to conform to pedagogic, literary and social norms ruling that field – and they submitted to this directive, often willingly. On this front they

⁵⁶ To the proximity of women to children Kimberly Reynolds adds a further reason (also applicable to the Italian context), namely the commonly held '...idea that women could write for children because intellectually and emotionally women were like children' (28).

were exposed to criticism and judged continuously, not only as intellectuals, but above all as women intellectuals. This situation brought about a strong adherence on the part of these women to those norms aimed at perpetuating the conventional role of women within society. Antithetically, the spheres of translation ended up representing a safe place for female intellectuals, where the risk of being criticised for the messages they communicated appeared considerably reduced. However, in some cases contradictions emerged also in the practice of translation. The innovation brought by some female translators through foreign models or single foreign works, considered at the time far from the target model of Italian literature for children, was often counterbalanced by the intervention of 'domestication' and affiliation to the coeval Italian literary paradigms, which were more conservative and didactic.

Translation thus came to serve a contradictory purpose, as a shield behind which to put forward women's own intellectual ideas, social conceptions and personal intellectual ambitions, even those far from the accepted norms of a patriarchal literary society, but also in many cases as a further instrument of conservatism. Thus, for example, Camilla Del Soldato, by translating Edward Lear's nonsense poetry, imported for the first time a genre that was completely unknown in Italian children's literature. In doing so she took the first important step towards the penetration of the genre in Italy, but,

by adapting it to her idea of poetry for children and affiliating it to the target Italian model of it, she prevented her translations from being genuinely innovative. Sofia Bisi Albini's own works for children (*Una Nidiata* 1890; *Omini e donnine* 1887; *Il figlio di Grazia* 1898, among others) adhered to the tendency which, at the beginning of the twentieth century, led Italian writers to devote more attention to the exploration of the psychology of female characters in literature for children (Blezza 121). This new approach owed a great deal to the contemporaneous development of the feminist movement in Italy, in which women writers played an important role (Arslan 23). Importantly however, it was also the result of the influence of translated foreign works, such as Alcott's *Little Women*, representing more generally a literature inclined to explore the psychology of the characters, tracing their physical and emotional development. Works such as Spyri's *Heidi* (1880), Malot's works for children, *The Wizard of Oz* (1900) by Baum, and Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), among others, represented for Italian children's literature not only a new literary model in which girls could be the protagonists, but also where in general the characters, be they male or female, were more psychologically characterised. Albini's *Una Nidiata*, for instance, is the story of a family of eight children, each of them with a specific character whose evolution is followed during the narration.

In 1902 Albini translated Florence Montgomery's *Misunderstood* (1869), a book that had a strong impact on the Italian target culture. The poignant quality of the narrative, its focus on the psychological insights of the child and on its relationship with adults, led Italian authors to develop these aspects in their own works (Boero and De Luca 76). Anglo-American works imported during the same period helped Italian children's literature to explore new venues and discover trends not necessarily or primarily linked to any didactic objective, but more oriented towards the creation of entertaining readings. Albini's translation of *Misunderstood* is very close to the source text in terms of narrative rhythm. The only omissions relate to passages which pertain to religious matters.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ In the first case of omission in the text, the protagonist, Humphrey, strongly regrets the choice of having taken his little brother Miles to the pond, careless of his sibling's poor health and causing him to fall ill. Humphrey's remorse brings back the grief for his mother's death. He is desperate and does not know where to find solace. At this point, Montgomery compares the feeling of the child with those of adults who, when in deep discomfort, cannot find a shelter in faith because it seems that God is not helpful. However, she says, God is always present and willing to help, even when faith seems lost (185-6). Albini, in her translation, omits about twelve lines of this part and sums up the concept (111-2). Later in the book, after his disastrous fall from the tree in the pond, Humphrey lies infirm in bed. His father's memory goes back to a day in which the child had pulled some ears of wheat out of the ground and brought them home, saying that they would have grown better in a beautiful garden than in open fields. Now, Sir Everard cannot but link those spikes to his dying child, who similarly will be soon eradicated from this world to be planted again in a beautiful garden in heaven; 'for natures like Humphrey's are not fit for this rough world. Such a capacity for sorrow has no rest here, and such a capacity for enjoyment is fittest to find its happiness in those all-perfect pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore' (277). Albini simply leaves out this entire part. For what concerns the translation of proper names Albini's strategy is not consistent. While the names of the two protagonists, Humphrey and Miles, are kept as in the original, most of the rest of the names are 'Italianised'. Sir Everard becomes Everardo, 'uncle Charlie' is translated as 'zio Carletto', Jane becomes Giovanna, among others. Several other Italian translations followed Albini's one and this may have contributed to obfuscate her fame. In the preface to the translation of 1934 published by Salani, the translator, Emilia Franceschini, points out that in her translation no deletion or omission

While in the choice of books to introduce to the Italian context the country these women felt freer to venture into less conventionally literary and ideological areas, even the most nonconformist among the Italian female writers and translators for children would publicly promote the traditional female role and support domestic virtues. Albini, for example, was very committed to the cause of women. She founded her own magazine for young girls, *Rivista per le Signorine* (1892-1913), which became one of the most widely read magazines of that kind and was merged in 1914 with *La Nostra Rivista*. She would express progressive ideas about women such as:

Oggi non vi è, si può dire, fanciulla intelligente in Italia, che finito un corso regolare di studi non si domandi: che cosa posso fare? Perchè ella non può pensare che una creatura, nell' età sua più preziosa, possa rimanersene nella ridicola posizione di attesa ... di quel qualcuno che non si sa chi sia - che non si sa da che parte verrà, - che forse non verrà mai...Pare impossibile che vi sia stato un tempo in cui tutti i padri e tutte le madri tenevano le loro figliole in una situazione così poco dignitosa. Pensiamoci bene: è il cartello del si vende che si lascia penzolare per anni dal proprio balcone: tutto ciò che una madre fa per rendere eleganti le sue figliole, per farle divertire, ha l'aria di una vera esposizione per trovar l'acquirente. Oh, voi avete ragione, figliole care, di ribellarvi a questa, non so se più penosa o comica posizione; avete ragione di chiedervi: che cosa posso fare? ("Fanciulle" 9)

will be found compared to previous translations. A look at the text shows that the parts omitted by Albini are reinstated by Franceschini.

However, these audacious opinions are somehow attenuated by a reaffirmation of the maternal and domestic role of the woman, still conceived by her as essential:

La nuova società ha bisogno di donne...che sappiano occuparsi del benessere del loro nido e dell'educazione dei loro figlioli, ma ricordarsi anche sempre dei poveri nidi ove madri e bambini soffrono. La casa italiana sarà sempre più un tempio sacro a promesse indistruttibili, e una scuola di energia e di amore, e i figli vi cresceranno con un senso di così alta adorazione e così profonda fiducia nelle loro mamme, che tutto ciò che vi è d'ingiusto nelle leggi e nei costumi, riguardo la donna, sarà da essi proclamato indegno di un popolo civile. Combattere così le battaglie femministe non vuol dire giungere a una vittoria inebbricante?...È quella che attende le fanciulle italiane d'oggi, le madri di domani. ("Fanciulle" 14-5)

At the time when Albini was directing her magazine, the book was still an inaccessible commodity for many, while magazines could reach readers more regularly and easily at home thanks to subscriptions (Salviati, "Quelle Quattro" 17-8). Although she could quite easily access a career as an editor, since she came from an affluent family, Albini still suffered the disadvantages of being a woman in the mainly male world of letters. Drawing similarities between her experience and that of three other Italian female journalists of the time (Ida Baccini,

Matilde Serao and Maria Maiocchi Plattis), Ida Salviati claims that:

Tutte e quattro infatti credevano profondamente nell'importanza sociale e culturale della loro professione. A nessuna peraltro vennero risparmiati ironie e lazzi da parte del giornalismo maschile che lasciava con una certa compiacenza lo spazio "educativo" alle emergenti penne femminili, pronto però a colpire senza pietà un'incertezza linguistica o un ritardo informativo ogni qualvolta le colleghe osavano addentrarsi, come sempre più spesso avveniva, nei territori del costume, della critica letteraria, e persino della pericolosissima politica. ("Quelle quattro" 18)

In this respect, Maria Pezzè Pascolato represents the example of a female intellectual who also played an active role in the political life of the country. Her adherence to Fascism and to the idea of directing people's ideas and behaviours can be ascribed to the wider discourse of the support Italian women gave Fascism. It seems that, in the first years of the 1920s, Mussolini intervened personally to convince Pascolato, who was not a Fascist at that time, to work for the regime (Filippini 110). In 1927, she became one of the national representatives of the *fasci femminili*.⁵⁸ In spite of her active and practical

⁵⁸ 'The Fasci Femminili are entrusted with the task of putting into practice the programme of welfare initiatives organised by the party. This is an extremely powerful means of propaganda and a good way of reaching out to the people. In particular the Fascist women are assigned the work of providing the direct assistance to humble folk which is offered daily in the local Fascio headquarters or, by means of the Fascist home visitors, in the homes of the poor and abandoned. These complex and varied initiatives of

endeavours aimed at helping women to build independence, Pascolato's support for fascist dogmas can be inscribed in her particular conception of feminism. She firmly believed that any form of discrimination against women had to be rejected and strongly advocated the right of women to receive the best kind of education. Yet, simultaneously she argued that the main duty for a woman coincided with her biological predisposition towards maternity and the care of the family (Filippini 62). Thus, she may have been misled by the apparently active social role assigned to women by the regime, for instance in education, and to girls, in sports and in parades.

Abilmente, la donna non viene però delusa nel suo desiderio di partecipazione, di attività: soltanto, l'ingannevole apparenza di *partecipazione* a livello decisionale è invece una *collaborazione* a livello esecutivo, una ghettizzazione subdola ed efficacissima che coinvolge nello stesso destino le donne della famiglia reale, accuratamente emarginate a inaugurare asili nido e colonie montane, le letterate accontentate con qualche premio o prebenda, e la donna comune, l'italiana media. (Arslan 26)

The same situation that took place in the *Risorgimento* was replicated during Fascism: women were again used as instruments. They were asked to contribute to the growth of the Italian 'new state' by producing as many children as they could

moral and material assistance are exquisitely feminine and could not be entrusted to other organisations with a greater chance of success' (qtd. in Willson 20-21).

and were given financial and motivational incentives in order to favour the creation of the 'nuovo italiano'.

Ma la persuasione occulta del regime verso le donne si basa prima di tutto sullo spregiudicato sfruttamento dell'immagine di Mussolini come Uomo Forte e Grande Filantropo, custode e difensore della fragilità femminile. E qui si scopre l'intrinseca debolezza delle posizioni anche apparentemente «progressive» assunte da molte scrittrici italiane, la fragilità delle loro analisi sociali, cioè in fondo un profondo motivo di debolezza: la mancanza di cultura reale personalmente elaborata che le rende succubi nella sfera politica. (Arslan 25)

It is unknown whether Pascolato underestimated the ultimate goal of the regime, reinforcing the position and function of women as supporters of men, both publicly in society and privately within the family (Pinna 41-2); it may be that she only focussed on the shared intents. And this was exactly the area in which *il Duce* asked for her help. According to Salvati, this attitude through which women acted both as supporters and adversaries of women's rights can be read as the enactment of a strategy devised to put forward, gradually through their works, ideas that at the time were neither welcome nor shared by many ("Quelle quattro" 19). This becomes clear when one looks more closely at the personal lives and experiences of these individuals which, as mentioned above, were anything but those of submissive housewives and mothers. Attention to

their private sphere thus helps us to understand their ideas about adherence to social conventions. Pascolato, for example, not only married her husband apparently against her father's will, but she also left him to return to her father's house in Venice after her mother had died (Filippini 18-21).

The experience of Ida Baccini, the best known female writer for children and educator of her time, seems to be in many senses emblematic of some common aspects of the lives of Italian women writers for children. Her works, the most famous of which was *Le memorie di un pulcino* (1875), were an expression of the didactic and moralising Italian literary principles for children of the time. In the XXVII chapter of *Pinocchio* Collodi cites 'il Pulcino della Baccini'⁵⁹ (referring to her *Le memorie di un pulcino*, published eight years before *Pinocchio*), in order to criticise the prevalent didactic tendency of books for children. However, Baccini challenged public notions of decorum when, after getting divorced, she had a child outside marriage. In 1871 she ended a marriage in which, as she said, any need for independence was thwarted by a husband who considered it only as an act of arrogance and rebelliousness, and this brought her to refuse any economic support⁶⁰ after the separation (Baccini 115). In her

⁵⁹ See Chapter Two.

⁶⁰ She felt strongly about women's self-sufficiency, and when her sister Egle was widowed and found herself unable to run the family concern due to her lack of commercial skills and experience, Ida harshly commented that Egle's fault during her whole life was to be more wife than woman (Baccini 199). In her autobiography, Baccini describes her husband, Vincenzo Cerri, whom

autobiography she tells how she spent her professional life in a continuous struggle to get her work accepted and acknowledged by a male dominated editorial world, and by a society in which the literary and artistic achievements of women were hardly tolerated (Baccini 153). Despite all these difficulties, her strength and perseverance eventually brought her to enter, as Lorenzo Cantatore states, the annals of female emancipation, being one of the first Italian women who ended up earning her living only from her own intellectual activity (19). It was only when she reached the age of fifty, though, that she openly recognised herself as a feminist (Baccini 188, 261):

Nei primi tempi della mia vita letteraria ero convinta che una sola fosse la missione della donna: la cura della casa, ed un solo il suo dovere: di adempiere agli uffici di moglie e di madre. Fedele a questo programma non ho esitato un momento a colpire con le frecce di una satira beffarda chiunque si discostasse con l'opera e col pensiero da questo ideale, e a combattere per lunghi anni le teorie femministe. Dopo, a poco a poco, e non per suggestione, ma per convinzione sincera la luce si è fatta nel mio pensiero; ho assolutamente rinnegato i miei principi conservatori e sono diventata quello che si dice una *femminista* militante, almeno nel senso di chi vuol lasciata una assoluta libertà d'azione alla donna, e crede i suoi diritti e i suoi doveri, nel vasto campo della morale, assolutamente eguali a quelli dell'uomo. E ciò che mi ha portato a correggere e a modificare

she married when she was fifteen, as a talented sculptor. However, the same originality was not applied, she explains, to his private life and his idea of a wife, who was conceived as 'la creatura *omnibus*', ready to satisfy his dream of having both a literate and bright wife, who was able to talk about poetry, and a servant at home (Baccini 111).

radicalmente le mie idee antiquate su questo argomento, sono stati i fatti, i fatti eloquenti, indiscutibili che hanno provato di quanto possa essere capace una donna forte, buona, intelligente, scevra da ogni pregiudizio. (Baccini 261)

One of the main issues that women writers in general had to deal with in the nineteenth century was their relationship with male-dominated literary tradition. Discussing some of the best known Italian women writers of that period, Alba Amoia talks about them as ‘examples of the feminine “anxiety of authorship”’ (Preface). Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s concept of the ‘anxiety of authorship’⁶¹ (49) experienced by female writers (set against Harold Bloom’s ‘anxiety of influence’ as applicable to male writers), aims at exploring the condition of being a woman writer and at defining her self-positioning within the line of patriarchal literary tradition. In *Women Writers of Children’s Literature*, Bloom replies to Gilbert and Gubar and casts doubts on the proposition that the issue of gender could become ‘a criterion for aesthetic choice’ (XII). However, there is a sense of ‘anxiety’ and a perception of displacement suffered by these women which, despite their reaction against external

⁶¹ ‘At the same time, like most women in patriarchal society, the woman writer does experience her gender as a painful obstacle, or even a debilitating inadequacy...Thus the loneliness of the female artist, her feeling of alienation from male predecessor coupled with her need for sisterly precursor and successors, her urgent sense of her need for a female audience together with her fear of the antagonism of male readers, her culturally conditioned timidity about self-dramatization, her dread of the patriarchal authority of art, her anxiety about the impropriety of female invention – all these phenomena of “inferiorization” mark the woman writer’s struggle for artistic self-definition and differentiate her efforts at self-creation from those of her male counterpart’ (Gilbert and Gubar 50).

constraints such as a specific patriarchal tradition or to counterbalance the inescapability of their status, results in their adoption of various stratagems, both in their working and private lives. More specifically, Lucienne Kroha, aiming at understanding how the condition of Italian women writers in the late nineteenth century is reflected in their art, spots the presence of

...strategies which allow them simultaneously to display *and* to disguise a subversive stance vis-à-vis the literary tradition on the margins of which they find themselves. As writers, they are also inevitably interpreters of their literary heritage, and it is their conditioned, strategic reaction to this heritage which I believe constitutes their shared experience as women writing at this time. ("The Woman Writer" 6)

This psychic struggle between the need 'to display *and* to disguise' engendered reciprocally exclusive needs and behaviour in women authors. Their admission into the literary domain had to pass necessarily through the approval process of its representative members. One practical and common stratagem of camouflage was the use of male pseudonyms. According to Gilbert and Gubar, the practice of female writers disguising their sex behind male names represented a way in which they '...could move vigorously away from "lesser subjects" and "lesser lives" which had constrained their

foremothers' and 'could walk more freely about the provinces of literature that were ordinarily forbidden to ladies' (65). Ida Baccini recounts that the editor Felice Paggi (who also worked with Collodi), suggested to her that she should either publish *Le memorie di un pulcino* anonymously or put only the initials of her name on the front page, in order to disguise her sex: 'Basterà l'iniziale – aggiunse – così molti lo crederanno dovuto a penna maschile!!' (Baccini 137). The first edition of the book was thus published without her name, but when in the following editions her identity was revealed, she was regarded with suspicion. That a woman was the author of such a successful book made some doubt that she was really the author. Baccini herself argues that such derogatory comments were due to the fact that when she wrote her book the development of female culture was neither welcome nor supported at all (Baccini 138).⁶² Her autobiography in many ways gives voice to the frustrations of most women writers for children at being doubly underestimated - as women and as writers for children. Having been recognised especially as a children's writer, Baccini felt deprived of the due acknowledgement for her works for adults (novels, poems, pedagogical treatises, etc.) which did not gain the same recognition by critics (257).

Another strategy adopted by women in order to 'disguise' and to secure a place in the literary world consisted in adhering

⁶² 'Questa opinione che sembrerà ridicola oggi, in tempi di femminismo – era più che naturale in quegli anni in cui lo sviluppo della cultura femminile era pressoché odiato' (Baccini 138).

to the prevalent literary models of the time. As we have seen, Italian children's literature was, between the last two centuries, overburdened with didacticism. Thus, many women writers produced a great amount of instructive books for children, to prove that they were 'up to the task,' and also able to compete with male writers on an equal basis. However, this thirst for acknowledgement brought about dangerous overreactions. The issue Elaine Showalter ascribes to British women novelists seems equally to fit this context: 'Among the personal reactions was a persistent self-deprecation of themselves as women, sometimes expressed as humility, sometimes as coy assurance-seeking and sometimes as the purest self-hatred' (21). In children's literature, this attitude often coexists with one in which women writers are themselves the first detractors of this body of literature. Ida Baccini, declared herself 'the victim' of the *Memorie di un pulcino*, even if it was one of the best-sellers of the last part of the nineteenth century. She also reports one of the letters she received from Matilde Serao⁶³

⁶³ Among Italian female writers, Matilde Serao (1856-1927) is considered 'la vera prima figura di scrittrice professionale e di donna prepotentemente emancipata....Matilde, figlia di gente colta ma povera, da ragazza fa tanti mestieri, fra l'altro anche la maestra, una professione tipica dei primi tempi dell'emancipazione femminile. Comincia a scrivere bozzetti per i giornali di Napoli con una vena facile e immediata che manterrà sempre, in cui la rappresentazione fedele, veristica della realtà si stempera nel "colore". Poi si trasferisce a Roma nel 1882, diventando una figura di spicco della ricca e mondana capitale alla fine del secolo. Nel 1885 sposa Edoardo Scarfoglio e con lui dà vita ad una serie di imprese giornalistiche, il *Corriere di Napoli*, il *Mattino*, che proseguirà dopo la separazione con la fondazione del *Giorno*. Scrive molti romanzi e un reportage sulla sua città, *Il ventre di Napoli*. Nei suoi scritti alle donne tocca un posto curioso. A parte il ritratto di signora piccolo-borghese che dà con *La virtù di Cecchina*, accanto ai suoi romanzi più importanti *Fantasia*, *Il Paese di cuccagna*, le novelle *Dal Vero*, produce

where her correspondent says ‘Non dite carissima che voi potete scrivere soltanto per piccini. Vi fate torto. Voi siete forte’ (Baccini 177). And Baccini herself claims:

E quantunque abbia tentato, con riuscita non dubbia moltissimi generi letterari, come il romanzo, la novella, la leggenda, la poesia, la storia, la commedia, il monologo e soprattutto la filosofia pedagogica (per i grandi), sono sempre rimasta la soave, la gentile, la delicata scrittrice per i ragazzi – mentre se debbo dire la verità han composto la maggior parte del mio pubblico le persone grandi...così gran parte dei miei critici mi ha condannato alla morale a vita, non concedendomi di scrivere altri libri che non fossero libri da ragazzi. (256-7)

It is worth noticing that this attitude is still common among writers for children, be they men or women. Bianca Pitzorno blames many of these authors for being the first depreciators of the genre, treating children’s literature as an inferior alternative to writing for adults and publicly apologising for that (“Storia” 37). On the contrary, it is unquestionable that ‘Without the existence of this fresh field several of the women writers...would have been denied a literary career; few would have attained the high reputation they enjoyed among their contemporaries’ (Auerbach and Knoepfmacher 3).

una serie di romanzi sentimentali (*Castigo*, *Addio amore* sono i più noti) in cui rinchiude la sua analisi del femminile’ (Rasy 137).

However, as already mentioned, these women also found themselves trapped in a number of contradictions. What Kimberly Reynolds ascribes to the British context appears also adaptable to the Italian one when she claims that literature for children represented the activity through which ‘...many women were able to forge careers, and some found themselves able to address topical and controversial issues and attitudes in acceptable ways’ (Reynolds 27-8), while at the same time it was also an instrument through which the inescapability and importance of the woman’s role at home could be reinforced. Baccini, Albini and Pascolato wrote in a period in which Italian women did not have many options but to conform to the patriarchal dominant cultural and social ideology. Indeed, they were expected to take part in the formation of a united Italy, but in a subordinate position, either from home, by playing the role of mothers and wives who were submissively supportive of men, or from outside the home, as underpaid and exploited workers. Any act of rebellion against this ‘unilateral pact’ was inconceivable for the majority of them. Few women at that time had the economic, intellectual and social means to perceive the wrongness of the inequality they were subject to, and fewer had the strength or even the chance to rise against it. As Kroha claims,

The premises for the participation of middle-class women in the intellectual life of the nation had been created by the Risorgimento,

when women patriots became an accepted part of the social landscape and women's magazines dedicated to them began to appear. After Unification, however, the state promoted the family as the pivotal structure of the new society and public discourse relegated women forcefully back to the private sphere. Leading intellectuals set aside bitter political differences to concur that women could best serve the interests of their country from behind the scenes, by educating their children in the virtues of patriotism and by providing the material and emotional comforts of a home for their husbands. ("The Novel" 166)

Moreover, any step toward emancipation, however small, was immediately hindered by contrary conservative forces. For example, the first signs of feminism, which started to spread in Italy in the last decade of the nineteenth century, alarmed the Church. Access to education would have led women to acquire a better social position and contravened bourgeois and Catholic morality. Therefore a strong campaign to promote the domestic and maternal role of women was conducted through Catholic journals (Pinna 27). Moreover, in order to be allowed to express their creativity writing children's books and in the choice of models and authors to import, these women felt they had to acquire respect on some 'legitimate' subjects.⁶⁴ For

⁶⁴ Similarly, but referring to seventeenth-century women writers, Tina Krontiris suggests that in order to legitimate the acts of transgression manifested in advocating their own authorship, women made use of previous models which usually derived from canonical works and religious texts by female authors (18-9): 'Women writers who wish to be profitably heard must acquire credibility. This means that they must accommodate rather than reject dominant notions regarding virtuous female behaviour. Voicing opposition to a certain oppressive idea must be done by

Italian women writers of children's literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this support seems to have come from their authority as educators. Pedagogy, as has been said, was one of the few areas in which their presence was tolerated (because of the proximity with children) and in which they could prove high competence and scholarship while still staying within the boundaries of social acceptability. Pascolato, for example, as an educator, was appointed to important public offices not only at a municipal level, but also at a national one: in 1923, the ministry of education wanted her to become a member of the commission set up for choosing the books for primary schools (Filippini 44). After her official adherence to Fascism her political role in the field of education became even more influential.

Despite the innovation imported in Italian literature for children through translations, there was still a strong authoritarian stream sustained by educational norms and embodied in scholastic institutions. Manuals for pupils were mostly intended as 'strumenti di omogeneizzazione sociale', aiming to 'formare "l'uomo e il cittadino" attraverso la presentazione di una serie infinita di ideali modelli umani portatori di irrepreensibili qualità morali e civili' (Boero and De Luca 22). In 1883 Collodi's *Giannettino* (1876), for instance,

underpinning other conventional ideas. Furthermore, a woman writer in a patriarchal culture must develop strategies against her own internalization of the oppressive ideologies around her: for when she experiences conflict between her desire and what she has been thought is right and proper, she must try to accommodate both desire and the ideology that denies it' (22).

was rejected as a schoolbook by the ministerial commission because its amusing and humorous side was considered inappropriate in an educative instrument.⁶⁵ This also happened to Ida Baccini, whose books started losing the favour of the commission because of the novelty of her pedagogic paradigms which, mostly drawn from the study of foreign pedagogy, strayed too far from those promoted by ministerial lines:

I capricci della commissione ministeriale non mi permisero mai di spiegare e di applicare nei miei libri tutta la teoria pedagogica che da anni ed anni mi frullava pel cervello....Molti innovamenti pedagogici e pratici furono da me preveduti e dichiarati fino da parecchi anni or sono, nei loro più minuti particolari. La prima idea delle scuole professionali, che in Francia, Svezia, in Germania e in Danimarca, fanno al giorno d'oggi tanto furore, è stata mia. (Baccini 142)

Translation, when used as a shelter, would allow women to import and spread ideas that, either for their innovative drive or simply for their distance from an accepted cultural and social set of values, would not have been welcome if coming directly from a woman. The name of the original author becomes the pseudonym behind which women translators could hide themselves in order to express their artistic and personal

⁶⁵ '...han pregi molti di sostanza e di dettato, ma sono concepiti in modo così romanzesco, da dar soverchio luogo al dolce, distraendo dall'utile; e sono scritti in stile così gaio, e non di rado così umoristicamente frivolo, da togliere ogni serietà all'insegnamento' (qtd. in Boero e De Luca 22).

opinions. Of course they still had to prove to be good translators, but this was more tolerated by men; and even more in the field of literature for children.

The adoption of different strategies seems to lead to the use of translation as an ambiguous means of expression, communication, and education, but also of detachment and self-effacement (Stark 126-30). This reminds us in some ways of the status of nineteenth-century British female translators as depicted by Susan Stark: women who, although well-educated and members of a progressive social and cultural elite, were still the victims of all the prejudices bound to their sex. It is here that translation becomes a means to very different and often opposite ends:

Translation, as opposed to independent authorship, might thus be a sign of conformity with traditional values. Its ancillary nature allowed those who so desired to shy away from public recognition. At the same time, however, it could be seen as highly skilled and at times creative work. The ambivalence inherent in the process of translation, its simultaneous derivativeness and originality, was particularly significant for female translators; the double-sidedness of the task encouraged many women who might otherwise not have become writers to develop their talents in this field. (Stark 126)

There were specific reasons behind the fact that translation represented a port for women. It has been argued that this activity contributed negatively to women's professional

existence by prolonging their inferior status as writers; ‘...whether translation condemned women to the margins of discourse or, on the contrary, rescued them from imposed silence’ (Simon 46) is a contentious issue. As original authors, women were often asked to use male pseudonyms, while as translators they were at least accorded full ‘authorship’ although this because translating was treated as an inferior activity; the prevailing opinion on original, indigenous children’s literature was even lower. This prejudice, which considered translation and children’s literature as much less prestigious activities than original writing and adult literature respectively explains why the presence of women writers was tolerated in these fields. According to Mirella Agorni, the issue should be analysed with respect to the specificity of each historical context and this, in turn, can make translation either an instrument of social and literary progress for women or a means of conservativeness, according to the circumstances (46). Thus the analysis of the specific cases of some female Italian writers and translators of children’s literature in the subsequent sections of this chapter, must be recognised as distinct from other national experiences.

For those Italian women who devoted themselves to translation between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, the practice acquired new meanings, different to those of men. Female translators of

books for children explored and shed light on some facets of the process of translation that are not so evident in the male approach to translation and in the translation of adult literature. This difference may have been due to dissimilarity of aims, or to a different manipulation of the means available to translators. The main reasons behind the emergence of such differences can be traced back to the status of inferiority to which Italian women have been condemned by a dominant patriarchal system, and to the peripheral position of children's literature within that system. As a consequence, women have had to develop a variety of strategies according to the result pursued, in order to escape or ameliorate their position.

Translation could become the signifier of expectations other than merely literary. It could become the medium of a message, a message which was not only the original writer's, but one that the female translators felt and made theirs. Though an apparent paradox, this sort of process of appropriation seems to reduce and widen the distance between the original author and the translator at the same time. In taking possession of the meaning of the text, making it their own, translators substituted themselves in place of the author. This phenomenon of transfiguration made these women claim back, through translation, what they had been deprived of, not only in their original writings but also in their lives, in terms of subjection to norms. Translation represented an act of indirect

cultural appropriation, of which the direct equivalent, original writing, was denied to them because of their gender. It was therefore inevitable that affinities between original authors and translators became strong and greatly influenced the selection of works to be translated. Maria Pezzè Pascolato's choice, for example, was not dependent on any preference for a specific genre or literary mode, but was made according to the inherent cultural and moral significance of these works and to the message that they could convey. She favoured authors whose poetics she found closer to her sensitivities (Filippini 32).

In particular, Pascolato's main conceptual idea of translation was not only directed at the enrichment of the target literature for its own sake, but especially at nurturing the social resources of that culture by treating translation as a medium of social and cultural education. However, this close connection with the source text could, in some cases, become so strong as to push the process of appropriation. In particular, this becomes evident when looking at Pascolato's translations of Andersen and Hauff's tales. She justifies the way she interferes with the source text in terms of her loyalty towards the Italian audience of child readers that she, as an educator, knows very well. Translation is, in her hands, an educational tool and it has to be moulded in order to fit the cultural context and addressees that it eventually reaches.

2. Maria Pezzè Pascolato

While dramatizing women problems – their exploitation in the workplace, the sacrifices and suffering induced by a patriarchal family - these writers often explicitly stated their nonacceptance or disapproval of the feminist movement. For them, contemporary feminism was a threat to their social status and an inadequate representation of the feminine. Anna Nozzoli calls these writers 'feminists degree zero,' that is involuntary feminists whose work happens to be potentially feminist. (Zecchi 89)

The above quotation may explain the apparent contradiction embodied in the lives and works of many Italian female writers who supported the fulfilment of the domestic role of women, but neither ignored nor passively accepted all the injustices, contradictions and conflicts in women's condition. This paradigm seems to fit the life and thinking of Maria Pezzè Pascolato, who became known as a writer when, in 1884, one of her sonnets was awarded a literary prize by *Cordelia*, the magazine for girls edited by Ida Baccini.

As was common for the daughter of an aristocratic family, Pascolato was introduced from an early age to the study of languages, and her linguistic knowledge was beyond the norm. She channelled her passion for languages and literature by teaching English, German and French, as well as by writing and translating. Pascolato's father founded the *Società Dante*

Alighieri, a body created with the aim of spreading Italian culture abroad, and in 1901 she, in turn, opened in Venice a *Circolo Filologico* for the knowledge of foreign literature and languages (Filippini 19-22).⁶⁶ She seemed to explore all the possibilities offered by the activity of translation: literary translation was not only a cultural medium but also an instrument of work. The creation of the *Circolo Filologico* was a perfect synthesis of this idea: the study of foreign languages was accompanied by conferences and seminars on foreign authors and literature. In the manifesto of the *Circolo*, Pascolato claims that the knowledge and use of languages was one of the basic requirements for the acquisition and development of commercial skills in a mercantile city like Venice (qtd. in Filippini 22-37).

Although hesitant at first, Pascolato eventually agreed to become, as a Fascist, the coordinator of one of the *Fasci femminili*. While covering this role, one of Pascolato's main achievements was the creation of the first Italian library for children in Venice in 1925. She had previously visited some libraries for children in Boston and New York (Scotto Di Luzio 123) and imported some innovative changes, like the idea of

⁶⁶ Nadia Maria Filippini's *Maria Pezzè Pascolato* is the only complete biography of the Venetian writer and has constituted my main source of information about her. According to Filippini the fact that such a significant figure of woman thinker, writer, educator and translator is denied the importance that it deserves in the history of Italian culture is mainly due to two reasons: '...perchè donna e perchè fascista....fu un'importante protagonista del suo tempo, una figura che giocò un ruolo significativo sul piano culturale e sociale: contribuì a modernizzare la cultura, a stimolare il dibattito culturale, a far circolare nuovi testi ed idee, a far dialogare differenti religioni' (Premessa).

spaces scaled down to a child's size, with small reading tables, chairs and toys. The library was open to children from six to fourteen years of age, and the selection of books was rigorously scrutinised for the suitability of content and form. As noted by Adolfo Scotto Di Luzio, the educational model advocated by Pascolato's library was in line with that promoted by Fascism. The main idea was that of the library as an appendix of the school; the place where the project of cultural and social education initiated within the family, and enforced at school, was carried forward. Thus, for instance, girls were encouraged to read books that supported the role of women as housekeepers and as mothers devoted to their children's education. The librarians in Pascolato's institute were school teachers, a choice made in order to guarantee didactic continuity with school activities. Additionally, the strict Fascist social hierarchy had to be maintained among the readers (122-7).

Pascolato's social and political activities help clarify her role as a mediator. During her hectic public life she was accorded much recognition and received high institutional appointments, especially as an educator during Fascism, when the attention paid by the regime to children started to become obsessive. That is why, especially after 1926, their education was increasingly organised and directed into a program of indoctrination and strict control through the creation of bodies

and organisations such as the ONB (Opera Nazionale Balilla) and later on the GIL (Gioventù Italiana del Littorio). As an educator Pascolato was a dedicated promoter of a kind of woman's life devoted to maternity and to the care of the house, while her personal life was one of total commitment to writing, education and politics. This reflects the asymmetry between the educational message she would tenaciously try to convey and her conduct in life (as mentioned earlier, when her mother died, she left her husband and settled with her father in Venice). Pascolato wrote substantially for children and engaged actively in pedagogic research, writing treatises on education especially addressed to girls. She is mostly remembered in histories of literature for two kinds of work. Firstly, her works addressing young girls were praised at the time because they 'principalmente mirano a coltivare nell'animo delle giovinette tutte quelle doti di semplicità e di accortezza e tutte quelle umili e modeste virtù che servono ad innalzare e a rendere più preziosa e feconda l'opera della donna nella famiglia e nella società' (Giacobbe 169). Secondly, she is highly regarded for acquainting Italian audiences with foreign works for both adults and children. She was a very prolific translator and her linguistic and cultural scope was vast, including translations of fables, novels, historical treatises, poems and authors such as Ruskin, Carlyle and Browning.

Pascolato's activity as a translator was an aspect of her broader project of cultural mediation. Carefully choosing and translating foreign works, she aimed at importing specific ideas in order to enrich Italian culture. Thus, for instance, the paradigm of *homo faber fortunae suae*, central to Pascolato's thinking,⁶⁷ is seen by her as embodied in Carlyle's *Heroes*, which was her first important translation, published in 1896. Giosuè Carducci praised her translation and expressed surprise that such a good work had been written by a woman (qtd. in Filippini 32-3). 'Faithful and elegant' is also how Carducci defined Pascolato's translation of Hans Christian Andersen's fables, published in 1904 by the publisher Hoepli. Although some of Andersen's children's stories had already been known in Italy, Pascolato's translation *Quaranta Novelle of H. Christian Andersen* gained great success, compared to the previous versions, and ended up being the most complete. Moreover, during the two years that she spent absorbed in this work, she devoted herself totally to the study of Andersen's biography and his personal epistolary exchanges. She translated the fables from the original Danish source text

⁶⁷ Pascolato's promotion of the philosophy of the *self-made man*, stimulated by her fondness of the literary tradition born and developed from Puritanism, inscribes her into what Mario Valeri presents as the Italian current of *self-help* (60-1), which started when Michele Lessona (1823-94), a doctor and naturalist, was asked by his editor to write an Italian version of Smiles's *Self-help*, something he did using Italian stories of people who had been able to build their fortune from nothing but a strenuous application to work (Boero and De Luca 32).

conducting, at the same time, a comparative study of its English, French and German translations.⁶⁸

After being recommended by the Swedish writer Astrid Ahnfelt⁶⁹ to read Pascolato's translation of the Danish fables, Carducci wrote a letter to her to praise her translation:

Carissima Signora,

Tra le tante cose a cui vo debitore alla signora Astrid Ahnfelt metto ora per prima la idea che ha ispirato in lei di mandarmi in dono le novelle di Andersen. Qualche cosa ne avevo intravisto in una traduzione tedesca; ma ora ne gusto la fantasia nativa e profonda, la grazia e l'andamento tutto poetico tra mesto e sereno.

Io non so nulla di danese, ma giuro che la sua traduzione deve essere fedele ed elegante. La ringrazio pertanto del piacere di avermene procurato lettura.

Mi creda

Suo aff. Giosue Carducci (qtd.

in Pascolato, *Quaranta Novelle*)

Pascolato was thus the one who properly introduced Andersen to Italy. Her translation paved the way for the numerous translations of Andersen's works that followed in time. The

⁶⁸ In the "Fonti Biografiche", Pascolato tells us that, when she was uncertain about the Danish text, she made use of the English, German and French translations (n. pag.).

⁶⁹ 'La scrittrice svedese Astrid Ahnfelt aveva portato a Re Oscar il volume delle "Poesie complete" del Carducci. In una visita ch'ella fece al Poeta a Madesimo, nell'agosto 1902, la signorina Ahnfelt gli parlò dell'Andersen e della traduzione cui la signora Pezzè-Pascolato allora attendeva. Il Carducci si divertì a farsi raccontare la novella del brutto anitroccolo ch'era invece un cigno. "Che buona idea," esclamò, "di farlo fuggir via dalle oche! Ah, le oche, le oche..." (qtd. in Andersen, *Quaranta Novelle*).

preface to *Quaranta Novelle di H. Christian Andersen* reveals all the facets of Pascolato as an intellectual. As a cultural mediator, she portrays the extraordinary life of the author and the background from which his stories had emerged in order for the readers to fully understand the uniqueness of his literary work. The moral messages conveyed by the forty fables, and the example given by their author's life, acquire great importance in Pascolato's complex idea of cultural transfer. For her, Andersen's life was that of a man who created his own fortune only thanks to a strong faith in his personal capacity and passion for writing.

As an educator, Pascolato was mostly driven by the intent to provide Italian mothers with an effective pedagogical instrument of narration for their children. The exercise of reading has great power: 'La lettura fatta insieme con la mamma o con la sorella maggiore soddisfa, meglio di ogni lezione, un vero bisogno del bambino; quel bisogno di simpatia intellettuale...' (XI). She ascribes to the act of reading aloud to the child the function of building and enforcing the emotional relationship between mothers and their children (XI-XII). She also seems to react vehemently against the idea that children were not to be given poetry to read, in order not to 'guastar loro la mente' (XVII). Poetry and imagination have to be defended against those who support 'l'opinione che non si debbano dare, invece, ai fanciulli se non certi aridi libri infarciti di nozioni

scientifiche...' (XVII). Her defence of poetry and imagination is a passionate one and, she says, Andersen himself was the champion of that cause (XVII).

As a translator, Pascolato underlines the difficulties met in rendering the fables into Italian. In his narration, Andersen uses spoken Danish. At the time when Pascolato translated his stories, the spoken language in Italy varied according to the regional area where different dialects were used (XII). However, she explains how she tried to reproduce a book to be read aloud and at the same time to 'conservare, anche in parte, la ingenua grazia, la semplicità, la freschezza, il delicato umorismo dell'originale danese' (XI). Also when translating, she focuses on the addressee. Although she mainly considers the child her implied reader, she points out that Andersen's stories were not solely written for children (XII). They were written for all those who can recognise the beauty and the power of imagination and poetry, and this is what unites children and those adults still able to appreciate that (XIII). The selection of books to be translated was made by Pascolato, paying attention to the links that these works and their authors could find in the target culture, to the seeds of new ideas and new models they might spread. To this end, she explored the common threads and continuities between different cultures and literary sensibilities. For instance, she called attention to the great affinity between Andersen's and Pascoli's poetics

(XVI). The Danish writer addresses both the child and adult talking to the “fanciullino” che vive ancora, grazie a Dio, nell’anima di noi tutti, e dell’anima è la purezza e la poesia’ (XIII).

The question that may arise at this stage, and that can be easily applied to the general practice of translating children’s literature, is whether Pascolato’s complex and all-embracing concept of translation may have pushed the functionalistic use of translated texts too far, enslaving them to a specific personal ideal. Her translation of Wilhelm Hauff’s fables can help answer this question. Pascolato’s translation of a selection of Hauff’s tales was published in 1910 by Hoepli. Just as she, in the preface to Andersen’s fables, had to defend the use of poetry in literature for children, Hauff, in the preface of *Märchen-Almanach auf das Jahr 1826 für Söhne und Töchter gebildeter Stände* (1825) reacts against the denigrators of the genre of *Märchen* (fairy tales) in the tale “Märchen als Almanach”. Pascolato’s preface opens exactly with the translation of that tale. The queen of a far realm, ‘una bella Regina pietosa’ (‘die Königin Phantasie’), worried for the suffering and tribulations of humankind, sends one of her daughters, ‘Reginotta Novella’ (‘Märchen’), to Earth to help people. Reginotta Novella, however, feels very sad because it seems to her that nobody loves her any more. Even children now refuse to see her. She thinks that people have changed because they have ‘...certe

guardie attente, arcigne, le quali esaminano e vagliano tutto quello che viene dal tuo regno' (X). The queen says that her enemy is 'la zia Moda' ('die Mode'). Fashion demands changes. Thus, 'Reginotta Novella' decides to address children. She is confident that they will welcome her, but she needs to disguise herself as an almanac so that the guards do not recognise her. However, the guards identify her and she has to reveal her identity as 'Reginotta Novella'. They say that tales 'riempiono di frottole la testa dei nostri ragazzi!' (XI).

Pascolato focuses on the message that Hauff's stories deliver to their young readers. Sometimes, she observes, a marked tendency to generalise can be perceived in them: 'la fretta di estendere a tutta una classe di persone o ad una nazione intera le osservazioni fatte su pochi individui; la fretta di generalizzare un primo giudizio, magari avventato' (XVII). However, she adds, Hauff is able through his narration to transmit positive values such as 'bontà semplice, la sana filosofia e certi tratti di delicatezza squisita, che ai ragazzi rimangono nel cuore' (XVII). As in the case of Andersen, again Pascolato finds affinities between Hauff's cultural ends and her own: she also tries to 'difendere la Reginotta Novella da' suoi nemici' (XVIII). In order to do that she promises that she will tailor the best Italian cloth around these German fables, and to prevent 'quella vecchia bisbetica', which is pedagogy, from complaining, she will spare neither time nor efforts in this

endeavour (XVIII). According to Pascolato, Hauff's fables are useful didactic and moral instruments because they '...mantengono i ragazzi in un ordine di pensieri sani, nobili, generosi...insegna[no] che e' meglio esser poveri e contentarsi e magari patire, piú tosto che essere ricchi a palate, ma avere il cuore di sasso. Questa si potrebbe dire anzi la morale di tutto il libro' (XIX).

While warmly recommending these readings to children, she also prefigures the criticism that would come from 'i professori', who would say that young people would do better to read authors such as Alessandro Manzoni or Massimo D'Azeglio. This would have been fair for her generation, she adds, but now things have changed and it has to be accepted that children dislike the books that their parents used to enjoy (XVIII). Pascolato sought to intervene in a debate that retains much contemporary relevance – how to stimulate young readers' attention and nurture their love for reading - and finds the solution in the book itself. Against the detractors of adventure books and fables, she sets her firm defence of works which are not only harmless, but gifts that leave the reader enriched (XX).

The absence of notes, Pascolato states, will help children develop their own interests without external imposition because 'delle note i ragazzi ne saltano già troppe nei libri di scuola. Se il libro diverte, le spiegazioni si cercano da sé; e quel che si

cerca da sé, s'impara e si ricorda assai meglio' (XX). Pascolato also believes that fables are a valuable instrument of education, because they tell the truth: they teach young people that all difficulties can be overcome if courage and good will are employed (XX). By pointing at her translation of Hauff's *Die Geschichte von der Abgehauenen Hand* (*La mano mozza* in her Italian translation), she says that she never hesitates to adapt or just alter the story told, whenever she finds it necessary, in order to give young readers the right message.

Die Geschichte von der Abgehauenen Hand is the story of a doctor, Zaleukos, who goes to Italy to pursue his fortune. In Florence, thanks to both his entrepreneurial and medical skills, he does well in his business, until one day a mysterious man asks Zaleukos to behead the body of the man's own dead sister, in order to send the head to her father, who, living far away, desires to see her remains for the last time. Only after completing the job does Zaleukos find out that the girl, the daughter of the Governor of Florence, who was meant to get married on the following day, was in fact alive and that he had actually killed her. He is condemned to have his hand cut off and flees Italy for Constantinople, where a house and a lifelong annual income have been arranged for him by a stranger.

Pascolato's version moves the setting of Zaleukos' story from Italy to Persia by adapting all the toponyms and the scenery. In the preface, she clearly states her reasons for the

change: 'Tal volta, da un'Italia di maniera, che a ragazzi italiani non sarebbe stato patriottico nè onesto presentare, non ho esitato a trasportar la scena altrove, come nella Mano mozza' (XIX). This choice may be better understood if we recall not only the context in which Pascolato used to work as a writer and translator for children, but especially her idea of education. One of the most common strategies employed by translators of children's literature has been that of domestication, where the source text is adapted for the comprehension and reading skills of the target readers. The fact that Hauff originally sets his story in Italy, more precisely in Florence, could have made it unnecessary for the Italian translator to change the setting, obviously familiar to her readers. However, Pascolato opts for a different technique, altering Hauff's context, because accomplishing her educational aims is apparently more important to her than adhering to the geographical background of the source text. She prevents the readers from identifying the scene of the story because she does not herself agree with the kind of image of Italy given by the author in the source text. She justifies the change of setting in her translation of *Die Geschichte von der Abgehauenen Hand* with her intention to avoid presenting her readers with the image of Italy that 'non sarebbe nè onesto nè patriottico presentare...' (XIX). This shows how her pedagogic aim is very strong and how it forces

the degree of acceptability⁷⁰ to the maximum extent. Instead, she prefers the predominant model of the fable. In transposing the tale, she is being consistent with the model according to which fables are set in distant worlds, places far away either geographically or imaginatively. This place could be the Far East as much as northern Europe or, as in the case of the source text, a mysterious Florence.

In the attempt to understand to what extent Pascolato interfered with the source text, I have compared her translation of *Die Geschichte von der Abgehauenen Hand* with a more recent and equally famous one made by Gianni Rodari (published posthumously in 2002 by Mondadori), a well-known Italian journalist and writer for children whose literary choices were always supported by specific educational ideas. The first main difference between the two versions relates to the setting, where Rodari maintains the original location throughout the story. Therefore, the protagonist Zaleukos moves to Florence where the central part of the story takes place. Direct references to the city of Florence were made by Hauff, as in the following passage:

So war ich endlich nach der Stadt **Florenz** in **Italien** gekommen...Ich mietete mir ein Gewölbe in dem Stadtviertel **St. Croce** und nicht weit

⁷⁰ 'Thus, whereas adherence to source norms determines a translation's adequacy as compared to the source text, subscription to norms originating in the target culture determines its acceptability' (Tourey 56-7).

davon ein paar schöne Zimmer, die auf einen Altan führten, in einem Wirtshaus. (38) [emphasis added]

Als es stark gegen Mitternacht ging, machte ich mich auf den Weg und kam bald auf die **Ponte vecchio**. (39) [emphasis added]

Es war eine kalte Nacht; der Mond schien hell, und ich schaute hinab in die Wellen des **Arno**, die weithin im Mondlicht schimmerten. (39) [emphasis added]

These are translated by Rodari as:

Giunsi infine a **Firenze**, in **Italia**...Affittai un negozio nel quartiere di **Santa Croce** e non lontano di là, in una locanda, due belle stanze che davano su un terrazzo. (43) [emphasis added]

Poco prima della mezzanotte mi posi in cammino e in breve giunsi al luogo dell'appuntamento. Il **Ponte Vecchio** era assolutamente deserto...(43) [emphasis added]

La notte era fredda. Brillava una luna chiara, i cui raggi facevano scintillare le onde dell'**Arno**. (43) [emphasis added]

In Pascolato's translation, instead, we find passages such as the following:

...poi proseguì da solo fino a **Sciraz**, l'**Atene** della **Persia**, per fare acquisto di belle armi ageminate e di smalti in quelle fabbriche famose. La Valle delle Rose, la Valle degli Usignoli, cantate dagli

antichi poeti persiani, mi affascinarono: ero stanco di sí lunghe peregrinazioni, e risolvetti di trattenermi qualche mese a **Sciraz**, per tornare in Europa alla fine dell'autunno. (55) [emphasis added]

There are also points at which the intervention of Pascolato is more drastic and where she omits large parts of the source text. At the beginning of the story, when Zaleukos leaves Constantinople, his father tells him that if he returns and is in need for help, he will find some money kept for him. After three years in Paris where he is trained as a doctor, Zaleukos goes back home to find his father's grave, and no money. He asks the priest about his share of the inheritance, and the priest tells him that at his father's death all the money had been donated to the Church. Zaleukos doubts the priest is bona fide, but decides not to claim his money back and leaves again:

Jener **Priester**, der mich in meiner Jugend unterrichtet hatte, brachte nur den Schlüssel; allein und verlassen zog ich in das verödete Haus ein. Ich fand noch alles, wie es mein Vater verlassen hatte; nur das Gold, das er mir zu hinterlassen versprach, fehlte. Ich fragte den Priester darüber, und dieser verneigte sich und sprach: "Euer Vater ist als ein heiliger Mann gestorben; denn er hat sein Gold der Kirche vermacht." Dies war und blieb mir unbegreiflich; doch was wollte ich machen; ich hatte keine Zeugen gegen den Priester und musste froh sein, dass er nicht auch das Haus und die Waren meines Vaters als Vermächtnis angesehen hatte. (36-7) [emphasis added]

While Rodari keeps the entire episode (42), Pascolato does not mention the figure of the priest and she translates as:

Uno andò a cercare le chiavi me le consegnò, e così entrai, solo e sconsolato, nella casa deserta. La trovai ancora tal quale il mio povero babbo l'aveva lasciata; soltanto il denaro, ch'egli mi teneva in serbo per l'ora dell'angustia, era sparito! Che farci? Bisognava contentarsi che non fossero spariti anche i mobili e le mercanzie! (54)
[emphasis added]

The intentionality of Pascolato's omission is confirmed by a previous passage in the text and her respective translation. In the first lines of the tale, the protagonist describes himself as:

Ich bin in Konstantinopel geboren; mein Vater war ein Dragoman bei der Pforte und trieb nebenbei einen ziemlich einträglichen Handel mit wohlriechenden Essenzen und seidenen Stoffen. Er gab mir eine gute Erziehung, indem er mich teils selbst unterrichtete, teils von einem unserer **Priester** mir Unterricht geben ließ. (34) [emphasis added]

In the above excerpt, the same priest is mentioned for the first time as one of Zaleukos' preceptors. Pascolato's translation simply leaves this element out: 'Sono nato a Costantinopoli, di famiglia greca; mio padre era dragomanno della Porta, ed all'impiego aggiungeva un commercio abbastanza lucroso, di essenze odorose e di seterie' (53). The reasons behind these

omissions can be manifold. Pascolato was profoundly and enthusiastically devoted to Catholicism; as a philanthropist she was actively involved and often the founder herself of many charities and initiatives for assisting vulnerable people. However, it may be too simplistic to ascribe these deletions only to an attempt to censor any criticism against the Church motivated by Pascolato's personal creed. In fact, they may be more probably due to her concept of translation.

As mentioned above, in the preface to Hauff's tales Pascolato stresses the point about her interventions on the source text: 'Quando essa mi arriva dai paesi stranieri, dalle foreste della Germania o dai fiordi della Scandinavia, le faccio la più bella veste italiana che so, senza badare a spese, di tempo nè di fatiche...' (XVIII). Thus, negativity about the Church would not deliver an appropriate pedagogical message to Italian children. This seems to be confirmed by her choice not to add any footnote or commentary that would explain to children the meaning of words such as 'il Corano', 'l'Alta Porta', 'i dragomanni' because the book, in her words, has to entertain and nothing more (XIX-XX). Again, Pascolato's pedagogical vocation prevails over any other ends. She controls what is suitable for children, and she does not hesitate to manipulate the text in order to meet those educational needs; she respects the source text until it interferes with her idea of what children should be taught and what they should not. Furthermore, also

does not hesitate to add elements that were not included by Hauff in the source text and this happens especially with the description of the place in which the story is set. So for example, she adds a description of the city of Shiraz (56).

To conclude, it seems that Pascolato could not be by turns a translator, an educator and a thinker. She was all of these things at the same time and her personal opinions, beliefs and cultural inclinations always played a decisive part in her choices. She translated and imported the main message of the original writer, but filtered it through the sieve of her own cultural sensibility and directed it towards her own pedagogical project. The role of the translator as an active reader and cultural mediator operates in this case on a narrow dividing line, and she ran the risk of forcing the source text into a subservient role with regards to the target text and reader. Pascolato was well aware of this, and openly presented it as a combination of the original author's text and her own ideas. She states this clearly: *'lo non ho fatto una traduzione: ho raccontato liberamente, com'era più adatto ai ragazzi che avevo d'intorno; e poi ho scritto, il meglio che ho saputo'* (XIX). Her Italian version of a work by T. Combe, for instance, was published under the name of Combe-Pascolato to make clear that it was not only the Swiss author's thinking which was being reported, but also her own viewpoints and theories (Filippini 39-40).

Pascolato translated in order both to divulge a new way of thinking, that is, a different philosophical paradigm, and also to educate. Referring to the main pedagogical intent of her translations, she claimed that:

L'assennato giudizio di Tommaso Carlyle – il quale stimava più utile dello scrivere libri mediocri il trapiantare da altre terre nel suolo della Patria quegli alti pensieri che vi potessero fruttificare – mi ha indotta a fare molte traduzioni di opere atte a contribuire all'educazione dei giovani e del popolo nostro. (qtd. in Filippini 32)

The unifying trait between the various types of translations that she produced is then to be found in the specific ideal of education that she intended to conform to. Her prolific activity as a translator was therefore inscribed within a wider and ambitious 'personal' work project.

3. Camilla Del Soldato and the Italian Limericks

Camilla Del Soldato (1862-1940) was a well-known Italian writer and educator. Her works for children and adolescents were well received by literary critics as bearers of positive values. In Fanciulli's words, her books teach that 'si deve amare e servire la vita, desiderare e procurare il bene del maggior numero, nella famiglia, nella Patria, nella natura' (261). Giacobbe, in his *Manuale di letteratura infantile*, praises her works for 'il sentimento cristiano' and 'il trionfo dell'abnegazione

materna' (166). Among her books addressed to young girls, he presents *L'unica via* as one in which the author demonstrates the thesis according to which unmarried women are superior to married ones because of their total devotion to others (167).⁷¹

Del Soldato's books come from a tradition of didactic literature written in order to satisfy specific pedagogical criteria. This strong adherence to the moral standards of the time is probably the reason why those works are rarely found in print today and are no longer part of children's readings; instead, they are treated and studied as literary documents of a specific cultural and historical point. Contemporary histories of children's literature however always refer, though briefly, to Del Soldato's translation of Lear's nonsense poetry, and this part of her work is still printed and read. She translated Lear's *Book of Nonsense* in 1908 for the Italian adaptation of Arthur Mee's *The Children's Encyclopedia*, published quarterly in Italy by the editor Cogliati and edited by her. Although this translation was undoubtedly an important first step towards the assimilation and reception of nonsense in Italian children's literature, the need to find a target model into which that foreign genre could be assimilated, and the necessity to meet the pedagogical expectations of Italian poetry for children, may have impaired the originality of the target text. In the case of *Alice in Wonderland*, the delay in the acceptance of nonsense as a

⁷¹ '...riesce a dimostrare la tesi propositasi, quella che l'attività della donna rimasta nubile è superiore a quella delle altre donne, perché può dedicarsi tutta agli altri' (167).

narrative mode in Italian children's literature affected the degree of assimilation of Carroll's works. The Italian translation of Mee's *Encyclopedia* introduces Lear's nonsense as 'Le sciocchezze di Edoardo Lear' (87) and their author as follows:

Edoardo Lear, valente pittore inglese, che fece e scrisse anche cose serie e degne di essere riportate, si divertiva ogni giorno, per far ridere i piccini, a scrivere e disegnare delle **ciuccherie**, di cui vi diamo qui un saggio come meglio ci è riuscito. (87) [emphasis added]

'Sciocchezze' and 'ciuccherie'⁷² is thus the way in which the word nonsense is translated into Italian. Del Soldato's work is a varied range of compositions. The difficulty of keeping the main sense of the original content and, on the other hand, the need to offer a proper and flowing rhyming scheme in Italian is evident and inherent to a genre whose essence is based on rhyming words and on word-play. Some of the solutions

⁷² According to Giampaolo Dossena the word 'ciuccherie' has probably resulted from the misinterpretation of the word 'giuccherie' made by the proof-readers who corrected the manuscript before publication. He hypothesises that Del Soldato meant to refer to the word 'giucca' used in her translation of one of Lear's nonsense poems with the meaning of foolish.

There was an old man of Aosta,
Who possessed a large cow, but he lost her;
But they said, "Don't you see
She has rushed up on a tree?
You invidious Old Man of Aosta. (Lear 62)

"La mia Bianchina! La mi' bella mucca!
L'ho persa" grida. E gli altri: "Un si disperì!
La si rigiri, e nun si dia pensieri!
Eccola là quella sua bestia **giucca**.
Si vede che avea poco da mangiare;
e l'è andata sull'albero a brucare». (Del Soldato 62, emphasis added)

adopted by Del Soldato seem to privilege a domesticating approach directed at bringing this genre closer to the target model of poetry for children, and therefore making it less original.

Firstly, the number of lines in the poems is modified. Instead of keeping the strict structure of Lear's original nonsense poetry, consisting of five lines and the rhyming scheme AABBA, she makes both the content and the rhyming scheme closer to the target model tradition of rhymes for children. Twenty-nine out of thirty-seven compositions in translation see the number of lines increased (twenty-six are made of six lines, two are made of eight and only one of twelve). In eight of the nonsense poems Del Soldato reduces the number of lines to four. Thus, we find translations like the following:

There was an Old Person of Cheadle,
Who was put in the stocks by the beadle
For stealing some pigs,
Some coats, and some wigs,
That horrible Person of Cheadle. (Lear 52)

Ci fu un ladrone
Nato a Pechino,
messo alla gogna,
dal questurino,
perché rubato

avea vicino,
 questo gran ladro
 nato a Pechino. (Del Soldato 52)

The shift is from five to eight lines, even if the length of each of Del Soldato's lines is rather shorter than Lear's. There are also shorter solutions, like this one:

There was an Old Man of Corfu,
 Who never knew what he should do;
 So he rushed up and down
 Till the sun made him brown,
 That bewildered Old Man of Corfu. (Lear 40)

Ci fu una volta un tale, un chiacchierone
 dei fatti altrui pur sempre affaccendato.
 col vento, colla neve, o il solleone
 correa dove nessun l'avea chiamato. (Del Soldato 40)

Del Soldato mostly adopts a translation strategy that privileges the target reader. In most of Lear's nonsense poems, the first line specifies the place of origin of the protagonist. Thus, for example we read: 'There was an Old Person of Mold', 'There was an Old Man of Kilkenny', 'There was an Old Man of Dutton', among others. Del Soldato either changes the setting of the stories or does not mention any specific geographical location. This may be due to several different reasons. Firstly,

she may have wanted to refer to places better known to the young readers of the *Enciclopedia*. According to Göte Klingberg's definition of 'localization':

The most radical way to pay regard to the understanding and interest of the intended readers is to move the whole scene of the source text to a place closer to the readers of the target text. This method was not unusual when children's literature was translated in bygone days.
(14)

Secondly, most of the names used in the source text (Coblenz, Dutton, Melrose, Dorking, etc.) are virtually impossible to rhyme with in Italian. Lear refers to a specific city or country in twenty-seven out of thirty-seven of his nonsense rhymes; Del Soldato does not keep any of the original locations. In sixteen cases she simply does not mention any place, while in the rest of them she changes location. In the latter case we have 'Pavia' for 'Coblenz', 'Romagna' for 'Dutton', 'Normandia' for 'Sparta', 'Rifredi' for 'Melrose', 'Patrasso' for 'Dorking', 'Lione' for 'Cape', 'Monteferrato' for 'Peru', 'Pechino' for 'Cheadle', 'Cina' for 'Ryde', 'Milano' for 'Anerley', and 'Sarzana' for 'Troy'.

Del Soldato's translations may also be criticised for their affiliation to the target model of didactic poetry devoted to children and Italian literature for children of the time. That may be the reason why Giampaolo Dossena refers to a comment

that he himself made in the 1970s about Del Soldato's translations, defining them as 'traduzioni di ambientazione radicale: sembrano cose originali, scritte da sempre in italiano', and corrects it claiming that '[l]e cose di Camilla Del Soldato forse non sembrano "scritte da sempre in italiano", forse sembrano scritte nel primo decennio del secolo XX in un vernacolo toско-magistrale, di maestrina toscana (89).

Along with Lear's thirty-seven nonsense compositions, Del Soldato also translated into Italian nineteen nursery rhymes for the *Enciclopedia dei ragazzi*. Here, the genre is even more pliable to the pedagogical aim of coeval Italian literature. A look at some examples confirms this view:

Dainty, diddlety, my mammy's maid,
 She stole oranges, I am afraid.
 Some in her pocket, some in her sleeve,
 She stole oranges, I do believe. (Lear 17)

È bellina, veramente,
 la piccina, ma ho paura!
 Non ha l'aria ben sicura.
 E la manica pendente,
 non vorrei, ma fa pensare
 a du' arance mal celate,
 dalla cassa trafugate...
 Bimba, bimba, non lo fare! (Del Soldato 17)

The last line of the translation makes the moral teaching of the story explicit, a moral teaching which is not emphasised in the original version. Here is another example:

A diller, a dollar,
 A ten o'clock scholar,
 What makes you come so soon?
 You used to come at ten o'clock,
 But now you come at noon. (Lear 35)

Quel ragazzo per davvero
 È anche troppo mattiniero.
 Son le nove già sonate,
 le lezioni cominciate...
 Come arriva puntuale!
 Scusi tanto, signor Tale,
 perché mai tanta premura?
 Ah, l'aspetta Bocciatura. (Del Soldato 35)

The consequences of the behaviour of the student are made quite plain by Del Soldato in the last line.

An extreme consequence of the exercise of affiliation to the target model can be that of a complete assimilation of the work to the extent of making any foreign origins no longer recognisable to readers. One of these poems, in particular, had great success in its Italian translation:

Per una strada che mena a Camogli

Passava un uomo con sette mogli.
 Ed ogni moglie aveva sette sacche,
 e in ogni sacca aveva sette gatte,
 ed ogni gatta sette gattini.
 Fra gatti e gatte e sacche e mogli
 In quanti andavano, dite, a Camogli? (Del Soldato 31)

This is Del Soldato's translation of the very well-known nursery rhyme and riddle *As I was going to St Ives*:

As I was going to St. Ives,
 I met a man with seven wives;
 Every wife had seven sacks,
 Every sack had seven cats;
 Every cat had seven kits;
 Kits, cats, sacks, and wives,
 How many were there going to St. Ives. (31)

According to Dossena, this is the case of the '...passaggio dalla letteratura d'autore all'anonimato folkloristico', meaning that the widespread popularity of Del Soldato's version of *As I was going to St Ives* in Italy led the poem to be fully assimilated, with time, into the Italian folkloric heritage, losing memory of both the real author and translator (83).

Although both the genres of nursery rhyme and nonsense were not immediately successful in Italy and the latter, in particular, had to wait a long time before taking root and

spreading, the importance of Del Soldato's pioneering act cannot be underestimated. She placed the seeds of Lear's nonsense in Italian soil and, by accompanying her translation with Lear's original drawings, made them known to an Italian audience (Dossena 86). Unfortunately, due to editorial cuts and rearrangements, her translations gradually disappeared from the new editions of the *Enciclopedia* (De Luca 50). A renewed interest in Lear's poetry in Italy is observable only in the 1970s when the genre started to become more familiar to the Italian public. However, the target reader had changed and new translations addressed adults. Carlo Izzo, a well-known Anglicist and translator, published *Il libro dei nonsense* in 1946. Yet, his version reached a wider audience only in 1970, in a second edition published by Einaudi in the series *I Millenni*. This is considered the first Italian 'faithful' translation of Lear's nonsense (De Luca 51). We can compare one of the limericks in Izzo's translation with Del Soldato's version to see the differences:

There was an Old Person of Dutton,
Whose head was as small as a button;
So, to make it look big,
He purchased a wig,
And rapidly rushed about Dutton. (Lear 44)

C'era un vecchio signore di Romagna,
col capo più piccin di una castagna;

ma volendo parere una gran testa,
portava una parrucca come questa. (Del Soldato 44)

C'era un vecchio di Caltagirone
Con la testa non più grande di un bottone;
Quindi, per farla sembrare più grande,
Comperò una parrucca gigante
E corse su e giù per Caltagirone (Izzo)

Izzo's translation is evidently closer to the source text, exactly reproducing Lear's rhyming scheme and keeping, in translation, most of the words of the original. Izzo's remarks about translation, which pre-date the development of formal Translation Studies, support the idea of the humility of the translator, and disagree with any act of subjugation of the text (Morini 22-3). On the other hand, Del Soldato here cuts the number of lines and uses 'castagna' for button, keeping a general sense of the content, but not its form.

From the 1970s onwards, the understanding and acceptance of nonsense has gained ground in Italy. Attilio Bertolucci and Pietro Citati, editors of the anthology *Gli umoristi moderni*, introduce Lear's rhymes by defining them as 'quanto di più inglese abbia mai conosciuto il nostro globo' and ascribe their distance from the Italian poetic tradition to the 'completo sovvertimento dei principi nei quali, prima di varcare la Manica, avevamo sempre creduto' (qtd. in De Luca 54). In 1973, the year defined by De Luca as 'l'anno fortunato per i limericks', the

comics magazine *Linus* encouraged its readers to compose and send nonsense poems to the editor. The extraordinary response brought together nonsense from all over Italy, making the genre more popular (De Luca 58-9).

In the same year the genre also finally reappears in children's literature, thanks to Gianni Rodari's essay 'Costruzione di un limerick'. He explains and analyses the structure of nonsense in order for use in schools. Rodari's intervention on the subject represents a further step towards the understanding and adoption of a foreign genre and a mode of literary expression into the target culture.⁷³ At the time Rodari was already well-known as a writer for children, educator and journalist. *La grammatica della fantasia*, in which the essay is included, is a book written for 'chi crede nella necessità che l'immaginazione abbia il suo posto nell'educazione; a chi ha fiducia nella creatività infantile; a chi sa quale valore di liberazione possa avere la parola' (6). Lear's model of nonsense poetry seems to fit this manifesto perfectly.

Rodari's work on nonsense poetry, if compared to Del Soldato's, seems to be very dissimilar. In Schleiermacher's terms, we could say that the former opts for a 'foreignizing'

⁷³ Among the reasons behind the delay in the reception of nonsense poetry, one is unfortunately represented by the very limited space occupied by poetry in Italian literature for children. Although in the post War period Rodari had the merit of making poetry for children popular, from the 1970s, mostly for commercial reasons, this variety has gradually subsided and been relegated to a minor subgenre of the main production of prose (Boero and De Luca 294).

translation. He aims at importing the genre as it is in its original form. He explains the 'rules' of the composition and invites teachers and children to fill this framework by applying their own fantasy. Rodari mainly tries to import a different poetic technique. Del Soldato, on the other hand, by 'domesticating' her translation, risked hindering the assimilation of a new genre in the target culture. The motives behind her translational choices may be different. First of all, her translations of Lear's poems are inserted, importantly, in the wider project of the translation of the *The Children's Encyclopedia*. Therefore, it is very likely that a common editorial line towards the translations was planned. Secondly, the historical and cultural context in which she translated certainly differs from Rodari's. As already shown in the case of Pascolato, the general protective attitude towards children produced a specific kind of translation, mainly responding to pedagogical and moralising criteria. That is why such innovative choices as importing new literary models saw, in the practice of translation, their ground-breaking potential decreased. This is also why their promoters have been mostly forgotten today.

Conclusion

The present chapter has investigated the personal and social conditions of Italian female translators of children's literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the way

these conditions influenced their approach to translation. The presumed inferior status of literature for children strongly affected the lives and work of these women, and gave rise to a series of contradictions, and inner struggles, experienced by many of them as writers and translators.

Constant effort to prove their dignity and autonomy as intellectuals in a conservative context is expressed in the contrasting functions that writing and translating for children assumed. On the one hand, these activities gave them the chance to work in a field in which their presence was accepted and in which they could feel free, active as scholars, and also gain economic independence. On the other, writing and translating children's literature could also become a further tie to a conservative tradition of didacticism. Furthermore, the obsessive attention paid to the social and biologically-determined role that women were expected, and often forced, to fill, brought about, in a male-dominated cultural context such as Italian literature, many contradictions that can be observed especially in those women's attitudes, which tended to support the traditional role of women.

Translation reflected these paradoxes; behind the mask of the original author women could be themselves, perhaps even more so than as original writers, and feel freer choosing, for example, to import new ideas and literary paradigms. This is corroborated by the examples illustrated in this chapter: Maria

Pezzè Pascolato, for instance, imported Andersen's and Hauff's works with the aim to enrich the target culture; Albini imported a model in which the psychology of the child characters was explored more thoroughly. In this respect, translation was used as an instrument of emancipation: it allowed these women to express their own innovative ideas as cultural mediators, but at the same time not to be accused of trying to invade male territory, and risk being rejected by it.

However, in their translations they gave priority to educational aims, and the source texts were manipulated in order to make them fit the accepted ideology of the period. This intervention produced translations that were closer to the conservative target model of literature for children. Pascolato, for instance, moulded Andersen's and Hauff's texts according to her specific didactic ideas; Albini, for her part, although she introduced a new kind of narrative into the Italian context, maintained a conservative line in her work; Del Soldato, while introducing a new kind of narrative, manipulated the text to make it appear as belonging to Italian literature of the time.

These conclusions give rise to further questions: can we say that translating literature for children functioned for these women as an instrument of emancipation? Given that through it they were able to influence Italian children's literature and culture to a great extent and that, by modifying it, they could spread their own ideas at the same time, were they innovative

or conservative? Did translation eventually represent for them only a further act of conformity to the norms and expectations of the patriarchal target culture? The fact that their translations in part conformed to conservative ideas may veil the already significant and demanding steps that they took as women intellectuals in their lives. Thus, for example, Albini's attention to the life and expectations of young girls, or Pascolato's concern for the education of women, should be reread as inscribed in their specific historical and cultural context. This is why closer attention to the work and lives of these women is needed and would shed light not only on the history of children's literature, both indigenous and translated, but also on the subject of women's studies. The next chapter, shifting fully to the adjacent historical period of Fascism, will further develop the series of constraints which authors and translators of indigenous and translated Italian literature for children had to endure, coming from the imposition of ideological norms under that political system.

Chapter 4

Norms in Children's Literature during Fascism

Nowadays it is generally agreed that translations are (part of) a complex social activity and are constrained by different kinds of norms. If one wants to see the entire picture, contextualization is called for. In this regard, the translation of children's literature is a rewarding field of study. Norms play a role in every translation process, as well as in (re)writing in general, but are of particularly current interest in children's literature. (Desmidt 167)

Introduction

This chapter will attempt to identify some of the norms that governed both translated and indigenous books for children at a specific moment in Italian history, during Fascism. There are various reasons why the historical period of Fascism (1922-1943) provides a suitable context for observing this literary phenomenon. The assumption that children, free from any previous political conditioning, would be much more ideologically pliable than adults (Guerrini and Pluviano 121) and that they would become the 'new Italians' of the Fascist empire, led the regime to try to impose on children a set of norms (ideological, moral, pedagogical, etc.) that conformed to its political aims. This brought about a situation in which different kinds of norms either collided or coexisted in children's

literature: pre-existing norms, new norms supported by Fascism, and norms imported into the country via translations.

The co-existence of diverse norms within a single system is made possible by a delicate balance of power, in which the strength of any given norm is kept in check by competing norms. Similarly, Fascism could not simply reject, ignore or crush the norms that did not conform to its ideology. The regime needed the support of other powerful forces within the country to back up its drastic measures, and received that support from institutions such as the publishing sector and the Catholic Church. As a consequence, Fascism was not always willing to break from pre-existing norms; this extended to norms coming through translations, especially in the case of those that came from influential allies.⁷⁴

It was not until the 1930s that the regime began to apply more drastic censorial measures against foreign importations (Bonsaver 90-1). Before then, according to Giorgio Fabre, the belief that Fascism would be able to incorporate those importations into its own ideological structure, together with the necessity of maintaining good trading relationships with foreign countries and safeguarding the activity of Italian publishers, made the process of negotiation inevitable (27). In the 1930s,

⁷⁴ 'Mussolini was the first to make sure that doors would be left ajar, thus allowing useful space for negotiations, self interested acts of toleration and plenty of ad hoc solutions. Moreover, in the field of censorship one has to take into account the degree of consensual collaboration through which publishers and authors acquired credit with the regime, which could then be invested in requests for adjustments and exceptions' (Bonsaver 10).

however, political changes such as the strengthening of relations with Hitler's Germany, the enforcement of the racial laws,⁷⁵ and the approaching war, exacerbated tensions against the *esterofilia* of the Italian publishing market.

In the specific case of children's literature, it has to be taken into account that the process of *fascistizzazione* of the school system, implementing a strict control on books for children, had already been imposed since the first years of the dictatorship and culminated in 1929 with the introduction of the *Testo Unico di Stato*. School texts were written by the regime's pedagogues, sent to selected publishers to be bound and printed, and then distributed to schools and public libraries. In return for their support of the regime's cultural policy, publishers would not lose their grip on such a strategic and lucrative sector as children's literature (Scotto Di Luzio 66-7).

However, the necessity of accommodating different and often opposite norms led to a general ambivalence and inconsistency in the regime's attitude towards culture; the Italian Fascist ideology declared a break from the past, but the regime did not seem to follow its own declarations fully. In order to explore this issue in relation to the specific case of children's literature, in the first section of this chapter the theoretical concept of norms as put forward in Translation Studies is linked to the study of children's literature and its translation during

⁷⁵ 'In fact, the regulation of translation hid a more specific and more violent intention: the elimination from the national literary scene of books by foreign Jewish authors, in line with the developing racial campaign' (Fabre 31).

Fascism. More specifically, I look at the products of norms and at their role in unveiling the influence and operation of norms on children's literature. This leads to the description of the specific norms that the regime attempted to impose on children's literature and culture.

The different products of norms considered here are both textual (such as books for children, Italian and translated), and extra-textual (such as coeval manuals of children's literature, reviews and articles from literary journals, translators' statements, prefaces, public acts, school reforms and political manifestoes). Extra-textual products represent a rich source of norms concerning Fascism. The regime's attempt to create and impose its norms to literature for children was conducted especially through propaganda. Thus, the analysis of propagandistic elements used by the regime to promote its ideology will reveal many of the strategies of refusal or conformity of texts for children to Fascist expectations.

The second section of the chapter will focus on the case study of the Italian translations of *Bibi*, the series of books for children written by the Danish author Karin Michaëlis and imported to Italy in the 1930s and 1940s. I have selected this example because the *Bibi* series promotes a set of values that is far, if not opposite, to the one promoted at the time by the dictatorship's propaganda. Therefore, it seems particularly important to look at the way in which this series was introduced

into the Italian system of children's literature through translation, and the response that it received at a contextual level.

At a textual level, I will analyse the first Italian translation of the first episode of the *Bibi* series, published in 1931, in order to measure the impact of the norms of the Fascist era on this translation. The pertinent extra-textual material in order to provide evidence of either the contravention or observance of Fascist ideologies in *Bibi* will consist of literary reviews from two journals as well as criticism of Michaëlis' works made during the *Convegno Nazionale per la letteratura infantile e giovanile* of 1938. The two journals are *L'Italia che scrive* (1918-1938) and *La parola e il libro* (1918-1976). The first publication, not ideologically in line with the regime, offers an example of the manner in which norms imported through foreign works can either comply or collide with pre-Fascist target norms of children's literature. The second periodical shows, on the other hand, some of the strategies adopted by the Fascist regime in order to impose its norms. The speech by Nazareno Padellaro at the *Convegno* expresses the 'official' point of view of the regime on Michaëlis' series at a point in time when the campaign to discredit foreign literature was conducted more openly and aggressively.

1. Norms

The concept of 'norm', as developed in the 1950s in the area of structuralist linguistics by Eugen Coseriu, has been criticised as 'a rigid and prescriptive line of demarcation' where 'literary language was simply considered to be deviant', and the notion of norm 'was particularly narrow' (Snell-Hornby 48-50). Translation Studies scholars have broadened the concept. Norms have been placed 'along a scale anchored between two extremes: general, relatively absolute *rules* on the one hand, and pure *idiosyncrasies* on the other' (Toury 54), and they have been described as marked by 'a socio-cultural specificity and a basic instability' (61).

So far, much effort has been devoted to defining, categorising and analysing norms in translation. Work conducted within the frame of Translation Studies has shown how research on norms has considerably benefited the field, as the investigation of norms has proven useful in understanding the complicated mechanisms involved both in the creation and in the translation of literature. This is mainly due to the nature of the act of translation which involves the transfer of a text between cultural contexts. This process enables the translator to decide which norms s/he will comply with; for example, either those expressed by the source culture or the ones prevalent in the target context. According to Toury, the alternative is thus

between the 'adequacy' of the translation in relation to the source text and its 'acceptability' in the target context (56-7).

The study of norms seems pertinent to every stage of research on the system of children's literature and its translation. In children's literature, literary and aesthetic objectives have hardly ever been separated from pedagogical and educational concerns. As a result, a great variety of people and institutions have been involved in the creation and control of books for children. Thus, each party concerned with children's literature not only looks at it from its own, very specific perspective, but also seeks to impose its own set of norms within the system. The study of translational norms is thus fruitful in the case of children's literature because it exposes more than in translated adult books the constraints and the norms of indigenous literature (Shavit 112). According to Shavit, this happens mainly because, due to the generally peripheral position of children's literature in literary polysystems, translators feel more able to intervene and to change the source text and adapt it to the norms of the target culture. The most influential translational norms in the case of children's literature, primarily at inception but still to a great extent at present, seem to be didactic. Translations of books for children tend to meet the educational requirements of the target culture and to be appropriate for the target children's reading and comprehension skills (112-13).

The more intersections a system shares with other co-systems and the more sub-systems it embodies, the larger the amount of norms involved. These conditions lead several norms to interact and collide with each other, either reinforcing one another or, alternately, becoming even more unstable. The latter seems to be the case of Italian literature for children and its translations. Therefore, in order to succeed in singling out the norms that ruled the subsystem of children's literature in translation within the specific cultural and historical context of Fascism, it is essential to contextualise and interpret the sources of norms.

As Toury remarks, identifying norms that govern any phenomenon requires the contextualisation of the phenomenon itself (63). Building a general theoretical model that can be applied to each particular case presents difficulties: undertaking research on norms within a specific national context calls for descriptive tools and interdisciplinary means. This is due to the fact that a norm's level of specificity and its degree of instability can vary according to its position within the polysystem and depends on the internal stratification of the system under study. Moreover, the difficulty of detecting translational norms is accentuated by the fact that they 'are not directly observable' and that the only way to analyse them is through their products (Toury 65). 'What is actually available for observation', Toury claims, 'is not so much the norms themselves, but rather norm-

governed instances of behaviour...Thus, even when translating is claimed to be studied directly...it is only *products* which are available' (65). Products as sources of norms can be textual, 'the translated texts themselves' (65), and extra-textual, as for instance

semi-theoretical or critical formulations, such as prescriptive 'theories' of translation, statements made by translators, editors, publishers, and other persons involved in or connected with the activity, critical appraisal of individual translations, or the activity of a translator or 'school' of translators, and so forth. (65)

The use of extra-textual elements as research tools capable of offering insights into the complex system of children's literature is essential in the analysis of a context such as that of Fascism. In this period, a policy of control was the main objective of the regime. In the case of children's literature, the attempt at dictating norms from above was conducted through propaganda, as stated earlier, and thus through operations of affiliation, stigmatisation or expurgation of books for children, both indigenous and imported from other countries, that did not meet the Fascist set of norms. Extra-textual elements such as literary reviews and literary manuals were seen as suitable instruments to achieve this end. According to Toury, extra-textual products may assume the double function of both accounting for and/or creating translational norms. In

other words, they can be descriptive and prescriptive at the same time. This is also the reason why Toury warns against a total reliance on these features and argues that

...there is no necessary identity between the norms themselves and any formulation of them in language. Verbal formulations of course reflect *awareness* of the existence of norms as well as of their respective significance. However they also imply other interests, particularly a desire to *control* behaviour – i.e. to dictate norms rather than merely account for them. Normative formulations tend to be slanted, then, and should always be taken with a grain of salt. (55)

He further adds:

Like any attempt to formulate a norm, they are partial and biased, and should therefore be treated with every possible circumspection; all the more so since – emanating as they do from interested parties – they are likely to lean toward propaganda and persuasion. There may be gaps, even contradictions, between explicit arguments and demands, on the one hand, and actual behaviour and its results, on the other, due either to subjectivity or naivete, or even lack of sufficient knowledge on the part of those who produced the formulations. On occasion, a deliberate desire to mislead and deceive may also be involved. Even with respect to the translators themselves, intentions do not necessarily concur with any declaration of intent (which is often put down post factum anyway, when the act has already been completed); and the way those intentions are realized may well constitute a further, third category still. (65-6)

In the following sections, I will show how the process that Toury describes above corresponds in part to the way in which

Fascism used extra-textual elements of children's literature in order to influence the reception of translations of books for children. It was substantially through them that the regime attempted to create and promote its norms. Yet, it seems that Fascism's goals were never effectively accomplished, or at least not to the extent announced through propaganda.

1.1 Norms of Fascism

During the 1920s and 1930s, Fascism tried to impose its norms on children and their culture in different ways. At a formal level, in 1926 Fascism introduced a program aimed at the *fascistizzazione* of childhood through the creation of paramilitary associations that grouped children of different ages in youth organisations.⁷⁶ The regime's propaganda was also spread through iconography (postcards, comics and cinema documentaries that mythicised Mussolini and Fascist Italy), dresses and games (especially military uniforms and toy weapons) and literature (books devoted to Fascist enterprises and biographies of Mussolini⁷⁷ were published). By exercising discipline through physical training and by yoking narratives

⁷⁶ The *ONB* (*Opera Nazionale Balilla*) consisted of *Balilla* for boys and *Piccole Italiane* for girls from 8 to 14, *Avanguardisti e Giovani Italiane* from 14 to 18 and, from 18 to 22, *Fasci Giovanili di Combattimento* and *Giovani Fasciste*. In 1937 the *ONB* will be absorbed by the *GIL* (*Gioventù Italiana del Littorio*).

⁷⁷ 'E poichè il Fascismo si impersona nel suo Fondatore, è naturale che numerose siano le biografie del Duce. I ragazzi amano gli eroi, e concepiscono la storia a traverso l'opera degli uomini grandi; sono portati, inoltre, a riconoscere, ed ammirare, l'aspetto prodigioso di certe esistenze; perciò poche vite potevano tanto corrispondere alle loro predilezioni come quella di Benito Mussolini, il figlio del fabbro che è diventato salvatore della Patria e guida al mondo' (Fanciulli and Monaci 293).

and images to the conveyance of a specific message, these initiatives intended to indoctrinate children and to imbue them with the values of discipline, patriotism, war, and the cult of *il Duce*.

However, it was above all through the school system that the regime's attempt to dictate its own norms in children's culture and their literature was conducted more systematically. To this end, Fascism reacted both against many of the norms already existing in Italian children's educational paradigms and literature, as well as against those imported through books for children coming from other countries. Thus in the former case, the educational paradigm on which the school reform of 1923 was built, namely Lombardo Radice's⁷⁸ pedagogical theories, was easily discarded and manipulated according to Fascist dogmas (Scotto Di Luzio 141).

Chesterman's hypothesis of a possible clash between 'norm-authorities' (66) brings about two scenarios: either the collision or the coexistence of incompatible norms. Attention to the attitude of the regime towards previous educational and literary models and to the way in which foreign books were transferred and inscribed in the national literary system can thus reveal the relationship between children's literature and

⁷⁸ Giuseppe Lombardo Radice (1879-1939) was a well-known Italian pedagogue. He was the author of the school programs for the Riforma Gentile of 1923. When the real intentions of Fascism became explicit, he distanced himself from the regime.

the prevalent ideology and education paradigms of Fascist Italy.

According to Even-Zohar, during specific historical periods, and mostly in countries under dictatorial political governments, the prevailing norms that determine the reception of translations of books for children coincide with those that govern local production. In these circumstances 'translation, by which new ideas, items, characteristics can be introduced into a literature, becomes a means to preserve traditional taste' (49), because it is made to conform to the predominant norms of the target culture. This phenomenon is related to the function that translations and source texts are meant to fulfil. As Gaby Thomson-Wohlgemuth argues in her study of translated children's literature in the East German social system, '...foreign books had to display the same standard and had to obey the same ideological principles as indigenous literature, which in turn meant that they had to fit into the ideological fabric of the country...translated books too had to submit to the paradigms prescribed by the state, which in the main were partiality and ideological acceptability' (50-2).

The attempt by Fascism to make pre-existing indigenous and foreign children's literature adhere to the norms supported by the regime clashed with the fact that the 'ideal' Fascist child existed more in propaganda than in the real life of the state. This led to ambivalence in the way the regime tried to achieve

its goals. This situation, which applied to children's literature as much as to literature in general, has been thoroughly discussed in studies devoted to the relationship between Fascism and literature (Billiani, Bonsaver, among others). Therefore, for instance, translations were considered necessary to fill the gap created by the lack of popular literature in Italy, to act as a stimulus to internal production, as well as to avoid lagging behind countries such as England, France and Germany. However, this attitude would clash with the autarchic policy that the dictatorship wanted to enforce. The relationship between the regime and the publishing sector was also one that mixed consensus and disagreement. In terms of norms, a process of adaptation and co-existence between business and ideological norms was at work.

Two different phases seem to have characterised the approach of Fascism to literature for children. In the first phase, approximately overlapping the first decade of the dictatorship, rather than substituting pre-existing children's books with a new literature⁷⁹ or censoring and banning foreign literature heavily or completely, the regime tried to impose a rereading and re-interpretation of those books in the light of Fascist expectations (Scotto Di Luzio 142). This 'translation' of indigenous pre-existing books for children and foreign ones into the language of Fascism was carried out through the publication of manuals

⁷⁹ The only genres in which Fascism created something new were colonial novels and biographical material about Mussolini (Scotto Di Luzio 141).

of children's literature that teachers would use in the classroom to interpret children's literature 'correctly' – according to Fascist dogmas – and transmit those interpretations to children.⁸⁰ Therefore, indigenous and imported texts were modified according to a strategy of affiliation to that target model, and criticism against prior Italian literature for children and translations was kept at an oblique, mild level.

As mentioned above, this operation was especially supported by the manuals of literature for children that proliferated after the *Riforma Gentile* of 1923, and affiliation was also the strategy primarily adopted by those literary reviewers who wished to sustain and promote the regime's educational aims. One of the best known and widely adopted manuals of children's literature was *La letteratura per l'infanzia*, written by Giuseppe Fanciulli⁸¹ and Enrichetta Monaci, whose first edition was published at the end of the 1920s. The support for Fascism is clearly stated in the preface of the book, where the authors state that 'il lettore troverà in quelle pagine un quadro abbastanza completo della nostra Letteratura per l'infanzia fino ad oggi, con tutta la luce che alle nuove generazioni è venuta dalla Vittoria e dal Fascismo' (VIII). In the

⁸⁰ 'Un'opera destinata ai maestri, perchè fossero in grado di orientarsi nel mondo della produzione libraria, selezionando per loro un corpus di autori per la corretta e uniforme educazione della gioventù, e di tradurre nei termini del linguaggio fascista i classici italiani e stranieri e in generale una produzione non sempre immediatamente fruibile nell'ottica del potere politico (Scotto Di Luzio 142)'.

⁸¹ Giuseppe Fanciulli (1881-1951) was a famous and prolific author of books for children. In the 1920s he began to support the regime's propaganda with his works.

conclusion, Fanciulli and Monaci argue good Italian books for children have the task of educating the child and transmitting the highest values of religion, motherland and family ('la bellezza dei più alti valori spirituali: religione, patria, famiglia') (312). In this respect, expectancy norms, both ideological and pedagogical, can be seen at work. Chesterman defines expectancy norms as those which

...are established by the expectations of readers of a translation (of a given type) concerning what a translation (of this type) should be like. These expectations are partly governed by the prevalent translation tradition in the target culture, and partly by the form of parallel texts (of a similar text type) in the target language (cf. Hermans 1991), i.e. by the prevalent scenes and frames in the target culture. (Chesterman 64)

These kind of norms are of particular relevance to children's literature, in which expectations are mostly created by the consideration of the child as a reader.

While Chesterman's use of the term 'translation' above refers to interlinguistic translations, I would extend it to include previous Italian texts that were not in line with Fascist norms. In this respect, Fanciulli and Monaci's manual established the norms to which literature for children had to conform from then onwards. In terms of ideological norms, understood as those norms that reflect political ideas and values, books for children had to subscribe to values such as religion, motherland and

family. Pedagogical norms (Desmidt 168) are also expressed by the two authors when Italian literature for children is praised and defended against its detractors: critics and educators who have never rightly recognised the true importance and value of books for children (4). On the contrary, Mussolini's saying *libro e moschetto/fascista perfetto* ('book and musket/perfect Fascist') emphasises the great value of this literature as an educational instrument of national renewal (314). Only *i libri cattivi* (bad books) have to be feared, especially those coming from foreign countries, because

...nonostante il carattere eminentemente nazionale della nostra attuale letteratura, negli ultimi anni si sono fatte sempre più numerose le traduzioni, e – quel che è peggio – le arbitrarie *riduzioni*: vezzo antico e anacronistico, che si poteva credere abbandonato per sempre (313).

Fanciulli and Monaci's criticism of foreign literature is not a direct attack, but argues for defence, a protective attitude towards, and stimulation of, national production ('le traduzioni sono troppo numerose in confronto alla produzione nostra e a quanto di nostro si traduce all'estero' 314).⁸² From their words, the authoritarian education and control that Fascism wanted to impose on the child also emerges: the choice of the books to

⁸² This kind of criticism echoed the general debate that saw publishing houses accused of publishing too many translations. The regime perceived foreign literature as a threat against Italian original production and the regime's political and ideological agenda (see Rundle and Billiani about this issue).

read cannot and must not ('non può – e non deve') be entrusted to youngsters (314).

More specifically, it is interesting to observe how these manuals presented single books and how stratagems of affiliation of both pre-existing Italian and foreign literature to the new target model proposed by Fascism or of criticism and open discredit were used by the regime. For example, in the case of pre-existing literature, the book *Cuore*,⁸³ a product of the specific historical time which saw the birth of Italy as a unified state in the second half of the nineteenth century, was the emblem of values that did not match those expressed by Fascism. Its 'sentimentality' and the fact that it promoted a secular model for the school clashed with values such as virility and religiosity, which had become central to the Fascist program. Fanciulli and Monaci exalt, in De Amicis' book, all those elements that Fascism could also support: 'C'è un entusiasmo, un impeto inesausto per celebrare tutti i sentimenti più puri e più alti: poesia della famiglia, della scuola, della Patria, della solidarietà umana fra le varie classi sociali, poesia della fede in Dio' (230). This description makes the values expressed by *Cuore* coincide exactly with the Fascist triad of *Dio, Patria e Famiglia* (God, Motherland, and Family). Yet, if family, as the basic social nucleus of society, and national civil unity, as an ideal to fight for and to teach in schools, are

⁸³ See Chapter Two.

positive virtues in De Amicis' work, the element of religion cannot be included so easily. *Cuore's* author believed in secular education and in his book there is no trace of Catholic values or teaching. The attempt to affiliate *Cuore* to Fascist expectations is mitigated by the final lines about the work, where the authors underline the distance of De Amicis' work from modern children and the new pedagogic system, and they conclude saying that

...è certo poi che la concezione generale di De Amicis non corrisponde più in tutto nè all'anima infantile odierna, nè all'odierna morale pedagogica; ma questo appare fin troppo naturale, poichè il 1886 è ormai lontano – al di là di una grande Guerra e di una trionfante Rivoluzione. (231)⁸⁴

The way in which foreign literature is presented in the same manual is also ambivalent. In general Fanciulli and Monaci did not support the admission of foreign literature into the Italian literary system. However, classics whose fame and importance in international children's literature could not be simply ignored were reviewed and evaluated by the two critics. Thus, for example, the great success of *Alice in Wonderland* is ascribed by them to the 'open and extreme reaction' ('l'aperta

⁸⁴ Scotto Di Luzio describes the debate that developed in 1923 between Fascists and Socialists about the celebrations for the fifteenth anniversary of De Amicis' death: 'La stampa socialista aveva risposto, ricordando che De Amicis era stato "uno dei più ferventi apostoli di un ideale, professare il quale oggi è divenuto un delitto". Nella celebrazione di parte fascista, l'opera dello scrittore assurgeva a vessillo della rivolta idealistica contro l'Ottocento materialista e il suo stesso "socialismo sentimentale" era fatto valere contro le rivendicazioni salariali degli insegnanti' (147).

ed estrema reazione') against didactic literature for children in which the fantastic and ludic dimension of books for children had overcome their moral and educational function (79). Although the importance of Carroll's work is recognised, the final verdict is one of disapproval in terms of moral and pedagogical norms. *Alice* is accused of a lack of moral values and of being too distant from tradition (80):

A noi non sembra che pregio sommo in un libro per ragazzi sia la totale assenza di significato morale e il distacco assoluto dalla tradizione. Il capolavoro autentico, invece, si ha quando valori etici ed estetici, novità e tradizione si fondono in una armonica vita, per la magia dell'arte. (80)

Barrie's *Peter Pan* is also criticised in terms of pedagogical norms. The protagonist is deemed to be too immature compared to Italian children of the same age:

Certo, il racconto appare lontano dal nostro gusto e dal nostro carattere. Lo stesso spunto che dà origine all'invenzione è inaccettabile. Chi mai ora, fra i nostri bambini, non sa che i fratellini e le sorelline sono "preparati" dalla mamma...non abbiamo mai conosciuto uno dei nostri bambini che dubitasse, come questo Peter Pan, di essere stato un passerotto, o un tordo o un fringuello, prima di essere soltanto un bambino...Partendo da questo spunto, l'invenzione assai spesso ci appare strampalata più che sottile, e scipita più che delicata; nè certamente, sempre per il nostro gusto, valgono a ravvivarla i frequenti giuochi di parole, piuttosto melensi. Ma qui, a differenza di quanto abbiamo notato a proposito di Alice, pur a

traverso una trama inconsistente, si aprono quadri magnifici per le immagini delle fate, dei fiori, dei bimbi... (87-8)

Similarly, Maria Nennella Nobili, in her article 'Ragazzi d'ieri e d'oggi', published in the journal *La parola e il libro* in 1933, considers stories as Peter Pan as too unrealistic ('troppo evanescenti e irreali') (91). Since it was more difficult to criticise classics on the grounds of their literary value, they were attacked on the level of different norms such as pedagogical ones. This attitude towards children's classics seems to confirm what Billiani has observed in relation to foreign classics from adult literature (152). They could not be simply ignored because Italian literature needed to keep pace with foreign literatures and with modernity. However, they were mistrusted when they expressed values other than those supported by Fascism.

At the beginning of the 1930s, the attempt to direct literature for children began to be undertaken more openly, through formal measures that increased the number of cases in which literature for children was kept under control and manipulated in order to support a specific political agenda, or to neutralise the possibility of negative influences. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, in 1929, through the introduction of the *Testo unico di stato*, a common schoolbook for all primary schools, the regime dictated the kind of books that a proper Fascist child had to read:

Oggi i nostri ragazzi preferiscono forse un romanzo che, pur restando d'avventure e di viaggi immaginari, è, diciamo, più vero. Sono romanzi di cose vissute, sono romanzi tratti dalla guerra, e danno alle anime il senso eroico della Patria: sono romanzi per giovinette, il cui partecipare alle opere assistenziali e a tutti i grandi avvenimenti della Nazione, dà forza di carattere, sanità fisica e il senso dei nuovi compiti della donna...Interessanti sono due aspetti caratteristici della nuova letteratura: i giornali per i ragazzi e i libri che spiegano ad essi e al popolo l'ideale di vita e di Patria che è l'essenza del fascismo. (Nobili 91-2)

Boys would, in Nobile's words, 'prefer' books whose stories recall real life and war, while girls, on the other hand, would enjoy reading about women who actively take part in the life of the nation.

A specific social role is now officially assigned to books for children: they become an active instrument for the transmission of Fascist ideology, as well as 'manuals of instructions' on how to grow up as a Fascist and become the 'Fascista perfetto'. If, according to Nobili, youngsters 'prefer' this new literature, Pia Addoli⁸⁵ advises that youngsters cannot benefit from the books that they 'want' to read, but only from those that are 'imposed' on them and that are able to transmit to them the pride of being Italian:

⁸⁵ 'Oltre a collaborare a *La parola e il libro*, negli anni trenta Pia Addoli fu autrice di traduzioni della collana "La Scala d'oro" e curò alcune sezioni nell'Enciclopedia *Il tesoro del ragazzo italiano*, entrambe della casa editrice Utet. Non è insensato ritenere che l'inserimento della Addoli tra i collaboratori al bollettino delle biblioteche sia avvenuto tramite il marito, Valentino Piccoli, intellettuale noto nell'ambiente milanese anche per la collaborazione con Treves a *Libri del giorno* e per aver sottoscritto nel 1925 il *Manifesto degli intellettuali fascisti*' (Fava 99).

...bisogna sostenere il fanciullo sul piano dell'Impero. A tal uopo non importa sapere quello che il ragazzo vuole nel suo libro, ma bisogna imporgli quello che vogliono i nuovi tempi. Il nuovo libro deve dare al fanciullo l'orgoglio di essere Italiano, la convinzione che l'Italiano è superiore a tutto, che per l'Italiano niente è impossibile. Anche la verità storica deve essere subordinata a tale concetto. (Addoli, "Il Convegno" 313)

The *Convegno della letteratura per l'infanzia* held in Bologna in 1938 represented the apex of a process of *fascistizzazione* of children's education that had become more and more aggressive through the 1930s. The Bologna congress and the official measures taken by the regime during previous years aimed at complete control over educational institutions, and aimed to impose Fascist ideas of the relationship between the child and authority: a 'rapporto autoritario e a senso unico, come se l'adulto avesse davanti a sé un'astrazione e un oggetto e non un essere vivente che è persona...' (Lollo, "Marinetti" 76). The proceedings of the *Convegno*, organised by the *Ente nazionale per le biblioteche popolari e scolastiche* and by the *Sindacato nazionale fascista autori e scrittori*, constitute a useful document that allows subsequent generations to understand, in the light of the relationship between pedagogy and ideology, the kind of norms that Fascism was eager to impose on literature for children. In particular, this aspect appears evident in Filippo Tommaso

Marinetti's⁸⁶ contribution to the congress, namely his *Manifesto della letteratura per l'infanzia*.

The whole set of norms imposed on Italian and translated literature alike were summed up by the Fascist triad of loyalties (Lollo, "Marinetti" 74). According to the *Manifesto*, books had to instil in children's minds a developed sense of patriotism, to fight even at the cost of one's life ('inteso come dedizione assoluta alla patria che può esigere ad ogni momento il sacrificio della nostra vita'⁸⁷) (7-10). The adoration of the State and the exaltation of war assume fanatic tones when literature for children is asked to glorify and praise Italy and its past military attainments, but also to understate its historical defeats: 'La verità storica rispettata ma sottomessa all'orgoglio italiano per modo che in tutte le narrazioni i nostri infortuni siano trattati con laconismo e le nostre numerose vittorie con lirismo'⁸⁸ (7-10).

Literature, through the narration of the historical splendours of Italy, had to transmit and teach national pride to children. Outstanding examples had to inspire children with courage and admiration of military life and the army ('L'amore per la vita militare e per l'esercito'⁸⁹) in a general frame of glorification of war against any pacificism:

⁸⁶ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti is mostly known as a writer and as the founder of the artistic movement of Futurism.

⁸⁷ Third point of Marinetti's *Manifesto*.

⁸⁸ Fourth point of the *Manifesto*.

⁸⁹ Height point of the *Manifesto*.

L'esaltante poesia della guerra che sempre idealizzò e valorizzò le razze intelligenti ed eroiche a dispetto di tutte le rancide teorie pacifiste avviliti...I bambini e le bambine...sono già capaci di apprezzare le belle forze micidiali e le squisite eleganze di una battaglia di cacciatori italiani contro cacciatori rossi.⁹⁰

Respect for the family and obedience to religion ('La Fede in Dio e nel Divino che nutrono d'ideale e di bellezza la terra il mare il cielo la bandiera della patria le guance della madre della sposa dei figli')⁹¹ had to be presented in books for children as fundamental values.

Beside Marinetti's points, two interventions in the same congress had to do with the importance of religious books in the education of young generations, and with the relationship between Fascism and the Church (Scotto Di Luzio 270-1). The story of the pressures exerted on children's literature by different parties is also linked to the complicated nature of the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Italian educational system. The process of unification of the Italian peninsula under the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, concluded in 1870, had led to the formal separation between the newly formed State and the Church. As a result, clerical power was to a great extent reduced, and Catholic schools were made equivalent to secular private schools. The *Legge Coppino* (1877), the law which made education compulsory between six

⁹⁰ Ninth point of the *Manifesto*.

⁹¹ First point of the *Manifesto*.

and nine years of age, established that the teaching of Catholicism was from then on at the discretion of municipalities which managed primary schools (Borghi 23-4). In its early phases, Fascism was openly hostile to the Church and the relationship between the two was tense. However, when Fascism achieved political power the Church saw many of its privileges restored. In 1929, with the stipulation of the *Patti Lateranensi*, the State recognised the Catholic Church as its only religious counterpart. The extension of religious instruction from primary to higher grade schools,⁹² the reintroduction of the crucifix within classrooms, and other initiatives, gave Pio XI the concrete hope of a definitive return of Catholicism to the centre of the public educational system (Borghi 232-3).

At the Bologna congress, another kind of norm emerged through the intervention of the publisher Enrico Vallecchi, who reminded the public of the importance of books in children's education and of specific problems related to publishing these books. Business norms, such as those that determine the form of a translation as a commercial product (Desmidt 168), also played a pivotal role. These norms are constantly subject to changes determined mainly by the laws of the market. During the 1930s, in a burst of nationalism, foreign literature started to

⁹² According to the Article 36 of the agreement, 'L'Italia considera fondamento e coronamento dell'istruzione pubblica l'insegnamento della dottrina cristiana, secondo la forma ricevuta dalla tradizione cattolica. E perciò consente che l'insegnamento religioso, ora impartito nelle scuole pubbliche elementari, abbia un ulteriore sviluppo nelle scuole medie, secondo programmi da stabilirsi d'accordo tra la Santa Sede e lo Stato' ("Concordato fra la Santa Sede e l'Italia").

be considered harmful by the regime. Accordingly, a debate developed around the necessity of reducing the importation of foreign literature. In 1933, Marinetti himself, at the *Congresso nazionale degli scrittori*, talked about ‘un’assurda esterofilia, la dannosissima esterofilia del pubblico’ (“Cose italiane” 141), stating that

Il Congresso nazionale degli scrittori richiama, quindi, i direttori di giornali e riviste alla grande responsabilità che essi assumerebbero se favorissero ancora i molti critici esterofili, che trascurano e denigrano la grande nostra letteratura... L’esterofilia, purtroppo, è ancora radicata in Italia. La parola straniera, la moda straniera, l’opera straniera continuano a mandare in sollucchio troppi italiani. E ciò, si capisce, a tutto danno delle cose nostre, ma, specialmente, della nostra dignità. (141)

This argument was justified by educational worries about the literary quality of books: ‘...Ma siamo noi degli xenofobi animati dal proposito di chiudere le porte al libro straniero? No davvero...Però quando, ad esempio, vediamo far largo, attraverso le traduzioni pullulanti, anche alle mediocrità che ci vengono d’oltre frontiera...’ (“Cose italiane” 141-2). The purported low standard of imported books was used to hide an alternative truth noticed by Antonio Gramsci in his *Quaderni del carcere*, when he claimed that,

C’è stato un certo risveglio di sentimenti nazionalistici: è spiegabile che si ponga il problema del perché i libri italiani non siano letti, del perché [essi siano] ritenuti «noiosi» e «interessanti» invece quelli

stranieri, ecc. Il risveglio nazionalistico fa sentire che la letteratura italiana non è «nazionale» nel senso che non è popolare e che si subisce come popolo l'egemonia straniera. Onde programmi, polemiche, tentativi, che non riescono però in nulla. Sarebbe necessaria una critica spietata della tradizione e un rinnovamento culturale-morale da cui dovrebbe nascere una nuova letteratura. Ma ciò appunto non può avvenire per la contraddizione ecc.: risveglio nazionalistico ha assunto il significato di esaltazione del passato. Marinetti è diventato accademico e lotta contro la tradizione della pastasciutta. (740)

Although in 1935 translations of adult and children's literature together reached the relatively small amount of 1173 out of 11502 new publications, it seems that foreign authors attracted the majority of readers. The main reason for the greater success of foreign books in the national market was ascribed to the superior commercial organisation of foreign publishers. The reality was that the spread of foreign books was a way for society to compensate for the scarcity of popular literature in the Italian market (Scotto Di Luzio 257-8). In practice, as Gramsci observed, Fascism did not prove able to offer any substantial and valid alternative to the hegemony of translations of popular literature and of children's literature. Apart from the production of propagandistic books detailing the heroic acts of Mussolini, and censorship against translations, no concrete measures were applied that aimed at strengthening national culture. This reason, together with the

enforcement of racial laws, led the regime to set up the *Commissione per la bonifica libraria* in 1938. At the Bologna congress nine hundred authors were banned. The proscription list named Jewish writers and others such as Carroll, Kipling, Fenimore Cooper, Alcott, London, Travers, Perrault and De Ségur, all no longer welcome in Italy. Nazareno Padellaro, the Provveditore agli Studi di Roma, a member of the commission formed to write the *Testo unico* for schools and adviser to the *Ministero dell'Educazione* under Giuseppe Bottai from 1936 to 1943, in his contribution to the congress “Traduzioni e riduzioni di libri per fanciulli”, stated that foreign books

contribuiscono a mortificare le esigenze nascenti e fondamentali dello spirito, disorientano, talvolta irreparabilmente, sovrapponendo fantasmi e sentimenti che si agglutinano in abiti mentali di altre razze e cadono così profondamente nella coscienza da non essere più estirpabili. (41)

Compared to the previous phase of a more overtly moderate approach to foreign literature, the position of the regime against translations now became aggressive. The attack was directed at enemy countries because ‘...non si può impunemente offrire ai nostri fanciulli un libro straniero, ed evitare un surrettizio contagio di germi... Meglio i libri mediocri di scrittori mediocri, ma italiani, che i libri famosi di scrittori famosi, ma stranieri’ (42). Thus, for example, *Alice* is accused

of offering readers a misrepresentation of reality, a distorted message:

Atmosfera da incubo che grava sulla vicenda finisce per deformare quel senso plastico delle cose e quindi quel giudizio obiettivo di esse che è il dono innato di tutti gli italiani. Non è la fiaba, ovvero la trasposizione della vita quotidiana su un piano che è sempre solido, ma una visione di un mondo in cui gli oggetti più ancora delle persone sono sotto l'azione del cloroformio...(Padellaro 40)

Carroll's country of origin is not spared criticism:

Se lo spirito anglosassone ama simili ebrezze, non si comprende perchè si dovrebbe ad esse iniziare il nostro fanciullo, che per disposizione di spirito piega all'obbiettivo tutto quello che tenta di rarefarsi nel sogno. (40)

Magazines that published foreign, and particularly American, comic strips were strongly attacked as this material was perceived as coming from enemy states. In 1939, the *fascistizzazione* of the educational system went even further with the approval of *La Carta della Scuola*, an educational reform produced by the then *Ministro dell'Educazione* Giuseppe Bottai to complete the process of *fascistizzazione* of the Italian school (Lollo, "Marinetti" 76). This process of forced adaptation of children's books to new values became the main strategy of an institution which was hardly able to produce anything qualitatively new in children's literature (Boero and De Luca 168). In 1943 a report aiming to monitor the effectiveness

of the measures dictated in the 1938 Bologna congress was commissioned. From the report, it emerged that journals and magazines for children were clearly still a prolific source of foreign material. A committee was then formed in order to direct Italian literature more determinedly towards patriotism, to eliminate any potentially negative influence on the education of young people, and to prevent the danger of 'modellare le nuove generazioni nostre in una maniera che non è nostra' (qt. in Boero and De Luca 175). Yet, it seems that Mussolini's plans were never completely accomplished, and although children's literature was in many cases made instrumental to political aims, the machine of censorship failed in other ways.

In fact, Fascist propaganda was much more effective on adults and educators than on children and youngsters. Moreover, no real and efficacious permeation of the new ideals was achieved through restrictive measures such as censorship and bans (Boero and De Luca 168-9). There are many examples of cases in which foreign works coming from 'enemy' countries and/or the expression of values and ideas far from Fascist ones were welcomed and escaped banning. In these cases, it may be that norms other than ideological ones were at work. This was, for instance, the case of the series for children *La biblioteca dei miei ragazzi*, which was published from 1931

until 1959 by Salani.⁹³ Most of the books in the series were Italian translations taken from a famous French series called the *Bibliothèque de Suzette* (1919-1965) and issued by the publisher Gautier & Languereau of Paris. The genre was the *feuilleton* and addressed mostly girls. The high number of foreign texts in the series would suggest a prevailing of commercial interests, and thus of business norms over ideological ones. In addition, according to Faeti, other kinds of norms may also have been behind this permissiveness. Mussolini, in building his own personal myth, followed the main features of the *feuilleton* genre. He also used to write novels; he liked to present himself as the main character and hero of spectacular adventures (Faeti, “Una settimana” 57). This tendency is ascribable to the strong mythopoeic intent of the regime. The balance between business norms (the commercial success of the series), ideological norms (the self-celebration of *il Duce*), and expectancy norms (the inappropriateness of foreign works) was achieved by including in the series some books whose protagonist was the celebrated Fascist child (58).

At first, *La biblioteca* was well received by critics, and this can be seen as another example of affiliation to the target model, balanced by the introduction in the series of books clearly in line with the propagandistic objectives of the regime.

⁹³ The publishing house Salani was founded in 1862 in Florence. Today, Salani is part of a wider editorial group, but it is still one of the most prolific Italian publishers of literature for children.

It was only after 1940 that the *Ministero della Cultura Popolare* imposed major domestication, for instance through the localisation of foreign places and characters. Thus, for example, the French work *L'héritière de Ferlac* (1923), becomes *L'erede di Ferlac* in its first translation for *La biblioteca dei miei ragazzi* in 1931, and *L'erede di Ferralba* in its subsequent re-edition of 1941. Proper names are also Italianised.

An example of a belated intervention of censorship is provided by translations of the German author Erich Kästner (1899-1974). Lavinia Mazzucchetti⁹⁴ translated into Italian *Emil und die Detektive* (1929) (as *Emilio e i detectives* 1931), *Pünktchen und Anton* (1930) (as *Antonio e Virgoletta* 1932) and *Das Fliegende Klassenzimmer* (1932) (as *La classe volante* 1934) for the series *Libri d'acciaio* (1930-1935) published by Bompiani. In 1933, Kästner's works were publicly burnt in Germany, and only years later Fascism itself would include them in its list of harmful books. In 1933 Emilia Santamaria⁹⁵, reviewing Kästner's volumes for *L'Italia che*

⁹⁴ Lavinia Mazzucchetti (1889-1965), university lecturer of German literature, was 'la prima ad introdurre da noi la conoscenza di tre quarti degli scrittori ebrei di lingua tedesca, da Arnold Zweig, a F. Werfel, da J. Roth a F. Kafka, da M. Buber a J. Wasserman' ("Dizionario Biografico delle Donne Lombarde" 724-5). In her article *L'Antisemitismo in Germania* (1919) she anticipated the German holocaust (724-5). In 1929, after subscribing to the *Manifesto degli intellettuali antifascisti* proposed by Benedetto Croce, she was banned from teaching. Thomas Mann, sending her his antifascist work *Mario und der Zauberer*, in 1930 wrote in the dedication: 'A Lavinia Mazzucchetti, questa scabrosa storia, di cui ella condivide la recondita protesta. Viva L'Italia!' (Rognoni XXV).

⁹⁵ Emilia Santamaria was a historian of pedagogy and literary critic, as well as co-editor of the bibliography journal *L'Italia che scrive*.

scrive, seemed willing to underline the powerful democratic message transmitted by Kästner as a way to oppose the Nazi/Fascist regime (*Emil und die Detektive*, 145-6). The Italian translator herself was extremely conscious of the subversive message conveyed by Kästner's books.⁹⁶

There was another well-known series, *La scala d'oro* (1932-36) published by UTET, which despite the inclusion of many translations was still welcomed by the regime. According to Mary Tibaldi Chiesa, author of ten books in the series, this editorial initiative put an end to aesthetically inadequate books for children, finally proposing works which were both stylistically valuable and well illustrated (Pallottino 64). The policy of the series consisted in offering high standard adaptations in order to allow children to appreciate classics that would be difficult to read in their source language and integral form (65). The coexistence of opposite norms emerges, in this case, from several elements. Emilia Santamaria's reviews, published in the journal *L'Italia che scrive*, represent sources of norms other than those supported by Fascism. As a critic, she praised the project of the series and approved the heterogeneous choice of books that would guarantee, in her view, a reasonable compromise between amusement and learning ("La scala

⁹⁶ 'Temo che se sapessi ricostruire la completa bibliografia, la mia attività di traduttrice (da me iniziata per ovvie ragioni dal 1923 in poi) raccoglierebbe una quarantina di volumi. Vorrei tuttavia far notare che non ho mai tradotto passivamente, ma collaborato solo ad opere di mia scelta, dove esisteva una mia adesione ai singoli lavori ed autori' (Mazzucchetti qtd. in Rognoni XII).

d'oro" 48-9). Thus *La scala d'oro* combined ancient texts (e.g. *The Aeneid*, *The Golden Ass*, among others) and modern classics for adults (for example *War and Peace* and *Faust*) with classics for children (*Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *Gulliver's Travels*).

Moreover, it is interesting to observe that some adaptations from foreign source texts (for example, *Peter Pan*) or from genres (fable)⁹⁷ which would soon be openly denigrated by the regime were still present in the series. Business norms can be seen as preponderant here: *La Scala d'oro* was a great commercial success in the 1930s, and works such as *Peter Pan* were the most successful among child readers. The most evident concession made to the regime was the inclusion in the series of the work *Guerra e fascismo, spiegato ai ragazzi* (1934) by Leo Pollini. According to Boero and De Luca, it is striking that in the series the celebration of the regime does not at all predominate, and that no mention or criticism of it was made at the *Convegno sulla letteratura giovanile* in 1938 (204-7). Again, this may be explained in terms of the necessity of reaching a balance between business and ideological norms.

⁹⁷ In *La parola e il libro*, Michele Venuti warned against the superstitious message conveyed by fables, arguing that they should not be considered art because of an overly marked fantastical element, and adds that the elimination of this kind of narrative would not constitute a loss, since it is only for amateurs (357-8).

2. *Bibi* in Italy: the Italian Translations of Karin Michaëlis' work

Among the authors banned by the regime at the Bologna congress of 1938 was the Danish writer Karin Michaëlis. Her first book about the adventures of a girl, *Bibi*, was published in 1929 and it was soon translated into many languages. The first Italian translation of *Bibi* appeared in 1931 as *Bibi. La bambina venuta dal nord*, by the Italian publisher Vallardi. Emilia Villoresi (1892-1979), a translator, poet, and writer for children (Giacobbe 268-9), translated into Italian the whole series of *Bibi* for the same publisher. The series consists of six episodes: *Bibi. La bambina venuta dal nord*, *Bibi e il suo grande viaggio*, *Bibi ha un amico*, *Bibi di sorpresa in sorpresa*, *Bibi e le congiurate*, *Bibi si fa contadina*. Given the high number of re- editions of the works, it is difficult to trace exactly the dates of publication. However, the whole series was published over the course of the 1930s and early 1940s.⁹⁸

Bibi, the main character of the series, lives with her father, a stationmaster, while her mother, an aristocrat who was disinherited by her parents for having married a man belonging to a lower class, died when she was only one year old. *Bibi* is an independent, confident and outspoken young girl whose developed sense of curiosity, and adventurous nature, lead her

⁹⁸ When the Danish author left the last book of the series unfinished, Villoresi completed it and even found *Bibi* an Italian husband in *Bibi si sposa* (1953).

to wander through Denmark in order to explore new places and meet new people. Although Fascism appreciated character traits such as bravery, boldness and adventurousness in youth, it was only at a formal level that it would assign women an active role in supporting the regime. As Victoria De Grazia shows, women ended up trapped in the contradiction between what was advocated for them through propaganda, and the actual values they were expected to subscribe to:

Thus at every level, fascist institutions sent out mixed messages. The youth group leaders harped on the virtues of domesticity. But by involving girls in activities outside of the home in the interest of the party, the Duce, and the nation, they undercut parental authority. Prescriptive literature preached subordination, yet praised displays of heroism. The reform of the school system, undertaken in 1923, was avowedly antifeminist, yet tolerated significant increases in the numbers of young women being schooled beyond the elementary level. This Janus-faced outlook originated no doubt in fascism's dualistic vision of the female roles. As 'reproducers of the race', women were to embody traditional values, being stoic, silent, and fervid; as patriotic citizens, they were to be modern, that is combative, public and on call. (147)

The character of Bibi does not seem to meet properly the requirements of the forcibly indoctrinated Fascist girl, nor to conform to the female role model promoted by Fascist ideology and by coeval literature for children. Manuals of children's literature provide a useful extra-textual document in order to

understand which kind of books the regime would consider 'appropriate' for girls. They illustrate how the cult of motherhood, religious morality, domestic duties, and support of paternal authority were the main values ascribed to positive female characters in literature ('Spirito di sacrificio e di abnegazione che fanno di ogni donna, nella casa e fuori, un angelo consolatore..') (Giacobbe 259). According to Donatella Ziliotto, who, as an editor, introduced *Pippi Longstocking* to Italian literature in the 1950s, and has recently republished Michaëlis' books for Salani, the *Bibi* stories introduced novelty to literature in which the idea of independence and free will for women was simply faked, and girl characters were still expected to fit within pre-determined pedagogical and ideological frames:

...la storia della bambina danese comunica un tale anticonformismo, un tale senso d'indipendenza, una tale visione democratica, che funzionò da violento antidoto alla retorica e alla chiusura del momento. Bibi era una ribelle, scorrazzava da vagabonda per tutta la Danimarca, respingendo l'autorità della scuola, della legge e dei pregiudizi...Fu una ventata di libertà che irruppe tra le piccole italiane, le figlie di dannunziane, le nazionaliste e autarchiche bambine degli anni '40. Non era l'immagine fasulla di un birichino, di una bambina maschiaccio che poi mette giudizio col matrimonio, di una gratuita inventrice di marachelle: era l'incontro con qualcosa che ci era stato celato e che poi avremmo scoperto chiamarsi democrazia. (Ziliotto, "Generazione" 260-1)

A look at literary reviews published in journals that were not ideologically biased in favour of the regime can also help us understand which norms were operating in literature for children (pedagogical, ideological, and more generally cultural) and how books imported through translations would meet or clash with them. Emilia Santamaria, co-editor of the journal *L'Italia che scrive* (1918-1938),⁹⁹ kept the columns “Letteratura per i fanciulli” (Children’s Literature) and “Letterature straniere in Italia”¹⁰⁰ (Foreign Literature in Italy) for twenty years. At the time, the case of journals for adults that gave attention to literature for children, both indigenous and translated, was not common. In fact, before *L'Italia che scrive*, neither theory nor methodical criticism on literature for children had emerged in Italy. As already noted, it was only after 1923, when Gentile’s reform added training in children’s literature as a requirement for future teachers, that manuals on this field began to be written. Santamaria’s reviews provide, in this context, a valuable extra-textual source of norms, for two main reasons. Firstly, the life span of the journal coincides more or less entirely with the period covered by this chapter, following Fascism from its emergence to its apex. Secondly, *L'Italia che scrive* did not support Fascism in any way.

⁹⁹ In the first decades of the twentieth century, *L'Italia che scrive*, edited by Angelo Fortunato Formiggini, represented, as a bibliography journal, a significant contribution to and support for Italian culture.

¹⁰⁰ The latter, devoted to children’s literature, was a prolific feature in the magazine and lasted until 1938, when *L'Italia che scrive* was closed owing to the suicide of Formiggini, to whom Santamaria was married.

Therefore, Santamaria's analyses of products expressing norms supported by Fascism are useful, in terms of expectancy norms, to understand the mechanisms of affiliation of translated literature to target models.¹⁰¹ Moreover,

Expectancy norms are primarily validated in terms of their very existence in the target language community: people do have these expectations about certain kinds of texts, and therefore the norms embodied in these expectations are *de facto* valid. But in some situations these norms are also validated by a norm-authority of some kind, such as a teacher, an examiner, a literary critic reviewing a translation, a translation critic, a publisher's reader...(Chesterman 66)

In children's literature, those recognised as having the ability and authority to validate norms are very seldom experts in translation, but more often scholars of this body of literature, teachers, educators or the writers themselves. Santamaria, however, was also the reviewer of the column "Letterature straniere in Italia". She reviewed the whole series of the *Bibi* stories. In general, her comments were positive and she praised Michaëlis' style. In finding the books amusing reading for both adults and children, Santamaria also approved the

¹⁰¹ Santamaria emphasised the importance of the act of reading as a formative experience and aimed at meeting the need of interpreting the growing production of children's books of those years, putting herself forward as a guide for readers. She put her expertise to work. Fava, referring to Santamaria, claims that: 'Secondo lei, la capacità dell'adulto di orientare il bambino alla lettura non deriva infatti da un'attenzione occasionale, ma richiede un interesse continuativo e aggiornato. In tal senso l'assiduità dell'offerta recensoria sottrae l'occuparsi delle letture dei fanciulli alla categoria dell'occasionalità e valorizza il consapevole proporre adulto' (104).

strong message of personal independence they conveyed. Yet, as the series progressed, the reviewer started wondering whether the character of Bibi would ever reach the degree of maturity appropriate to her own age. 'Ormai ci troviamo di fronte una signorina: sarà riuscita la M. a creare una quasi nuova creatura, nuovi interessi, una spontaneità diversa?' ("Bibi e il suo grande viaggio" 205). In the article on the next episode she suggested a negative answer to this question:

Bibi è nata ingenua, bimba, e adesso, a sedici anni, non riesce a diventare una signorina. Qui è il pericolo della creazione della M. la quale dovrebbe o chiudere il suo ciclo o dare a Bibi ormai quella certa maturità nel considerare i fatti sociali e politici che le si presentano. ("Bibi ha un amico" 145)

Santamaria thus expressed her own pedagogical perplexities about *Bibi*. In focussing on the character itself and on her transition from childhood to adulthood, she could not perceive any progress; the readers were not witnessing any real development in Bibi who, at sixteen, was still as immature as she had been at the beginning of the series, when she was still a child. According to Santamaria, Michaëlis did not meet expectancy norms in pedagogical and educational terms. Besides, Santamaria's remark that Michaëlis should have either closed the series or provided Bibi with a social and political conscience may appear as a criticism at the level of ideological norms. She may have thought that, more than ever

at that particular time, children should have been given the instruments to understand and thus refuse the propaganda of Fascism through literature targeted at them. In 1934 Santamaria confirmed the merits of the series, but Bibi's developmental and psychological backwardness was still perceived as a great limitation ("Bibi e le congiurate", 108). In 1936 in the review of *Bibi: di sorpresa in sorpresa*, she pointed out again: 'Tutta la tessitura del libro è intelaiata sulle osservazioni che fa Bibi – ancora un pò troppo ingenua e puerili -...' (301).

The ideological orientation followed by *L'Italia che scrive* during the First World War refrained from engaging in overt patriotism, and avoided any direct involvement in political issues. In the 1920s, when Santamaria started witnessing a gradual, but unrelenting, incursion of Fascist ideology in books for children, she kept her disapproval against the new ideology unvoiced, and concentrated on discussing the style and the pedagogic principles of the works reviewed (Fava 194-5). However, as the educational project of the regime increasingly intruded into the personal lives of children, it became harder for her to keep her superficial neutrality. As a result, in her reviews, pedagogical and stylistic norms can be easily detected because they are overtly expressed, while the ideological norms need to be deduced from her silence on those subjects and from the fact that she banned from her column those books

that explicitly adhered to the regime's ideology, which she considered to have no literary value (Fava 194-5). Santamaria's intervention can then be considered as representing norms that were far from Fascist ideology.

Manuals and literary journals openly aligned with the regime's ideology also reviewed the *Bibi* series. Fanciulli and Monaci, for instance, described the character of Bibi as possessing '...una poetica ingenuità, congiunta a una maturità nel giudicare, nel sentire, nel volere' (128). The Danish girl is described as a positive character; she is naive but mature at the same time. In the literary journal *La parola e il libro* (1918-1976), reviews took the form of recommendations for library acquisitions. From 1927 the journal overtly adopted the line of the regime (Fava 98). Pia Addoli, one of the contributors to the journal, was herself a writer and translator of children's books who openly adhered to Fascism.¹⁰² In her review of *Bibi e il suo grande viaggio* (1932), she signalled affinities between the Danish work and *Lisa-Betta*, an Italian children's book written by Giuseppe Fanciulli. The first volume of *Lisa-Betta* was published in 1932 and the second, *Lisa-Betta al mare*, in 1942. Fanciulli's work is the story of a young girl, Lisa-Betta, whose

¹⁰² 'Oltre a collaborare a *La parola e il libro*, negli anni trenta Pia Addoli fu autrice di traduzioni della collana "La Scala d'oro" e curò alcune sezioni nell'Enciclopedia *Il tesoro del ragazzo italiano*, entrambe della casa editrice Utet. Non è insensato ritenere che l'inserimento della Addoli tra i collaboratori al bollettino delle biblioteche sia avvenuto tramite il marito, Valentino Piccoli, intellettuale noto nell'ambiente milanese anche per la collaborazione con Treves a *Libri del giorno* e per aver sottoscritto nel 1925 il *Manifesto degli intellettuali fascisti*' (Fava 99).

personality is torn between an obedient and well-behaved side (Lisa) and a naughty, less disciplined one (Betta).

Addoli calls Bibi the ‘sorellina nordica di Lisa-Betta’ (“Bibi e il suo grande viaggio”, 455). This may be recognised as an attempt to affiliate the imported product both to a model already present in the target culture – Italian stories addressing a female audience – and to the production of an author such as Fanciulli, in line with the regime. *Bibi* would actually have fitted this model in its more superficial features, had it not been for the fact that the main ideology behind the Danish story goes against the set of values that Fascism intended to promulgate through children’s literature. The corresponding Italian model supports a more authoritarian relationship between the adult and the child (Lollo, “Marinetti” 76) where the latter becomes destined to fulfil the ideal of the ‘uomo nuovo’ (Guerrini e Pluviano 121). According to these reviews, Fascism seemed to accept the *Bibi* series and the philosophy underpinning these books. However, a closer look at their actual translation into Italian, and at some further extra-textual products, may tell a more complex story, and disclose those covert mechanisms of rejection or affiliation to the target model that only later, with the enforcement of censorship, would become more explicit, and eventually bring about an actual ban on Michaëlis’ works.

Eva Kampmann is the translator of the most recent edition of *Bibi* into Italian. Published in 2005, this is the second Italian

translation of the work since 1931. In the 'Nota alla traduzione', Kampmann, who has translated the book from the Danish original text, suggests that the previous Italian translation might have made use of a German mediating translation. In the opening paragraph of Villoresi's translation, the narrator directly addresses Italian girl readers:

Scommetto con voi quel che volete, che i bambini danesi, quando si svegliano nel cuore della notte, potrebbero disegnare, a occhi chiusi, una carta quasi esatta della Danimarca. Ma questo libro verrà letto, suppongo, da bambine che, in Danimarca, non hanno ancor messo nemmeno l'unghia del dito mignolo e dalle quali non si può pretendere che sappiano, della Danimarca, più di quanto sappiano, poniamo, i bambini danesi dell'**Italia**. (Villoresi 7) [added emphasis]

Kampmann reveals that this part of the translation does not appear in the source text; it is an addition. In order to determine whether this addition could be ascribed to Villoresi or if it was inherited from the mediating translation, I have compared it with the German translation¹⁰³ of the first book of *Bibi* that was published in 1929 by Herbert Stuffer in Berlin. The name of the translator is not indicated, and the original Danish illustrations are kept.

¹⁰³ I have also conducted the comparison with an English translation of the same episode of the series. The English translation dates from 1933 and was published by George Allen and Unwin in London. The English translator is Rose Fyleman (1877-1957), a poet, writer for children and translator. For the same publisher she also translated Michaëlis' *Bibi Goes Travelling*, with illustrations by Hedvig Collin.

In the introduction, the only differences between the Italian and the German translations pertain to the changes referring to the nationality of the implied readers. The German translation reads as:

Über dieses Buch soll ja in der Hauptsache von kleinen Mädchen gelesen werden, die noch nie auch nur eine Fußspitze nach Dänemark gesetzt haben, und von denen kann man nicht gut verlangen, daß sie mehr von Dänemark wissen als – sagen wir einmal – dänische Kinder von **Deutschland**. (9) [added emphasis]¹⁰⁴

It is clear that this part, in which readers of different nationalities are addressed, was added.

The fact that both the Italian and German translations begin with exactly the same paragraph opens up the possibilities that one makes use of the other as a mediating translation, or that they were both part of a common project probably set up by the Danish publisher to target a foreign market. However, the dates of publication and the fact, pointed out by Kampmann, that the toponyms of the Italian version follow the German spelling rather than the Danish one (for example, 'Himmelberg' for 'Himmelbjerg'¹⁰⁵ 258), make it more

¹⁰⁴ Fyleman translates as 'But this book will be mostly read by little girls who have never so much as had one foot in Denmark, and you can hardly expect them to know any more about Denmark than – let us say – Danish children would know about **England** (11)' [emphasis added].

¹⁰⁵ The British translation at times opts for the German spelling ('Himmelberg' 12) and at others it changes in favour of the British one. For 'Jutland' the British spelling is kept while both the Italian and the German use the German 'Jütland'. Kampmann, who translates from Danish, uses 'JutlaIndia' (probably seen as closer to the Danish 'Jylland'). 'Thurø', the name of the Danish small island that the narrator indicates as her own home is translated as 'Thüro' by Villoresi, 'Thurö' by both the German (25)

plausible that Villoresi used the German translation. Kampmann also notices some deletions in the Italian version of 1931, and concludes by wondering whether *Bibi* was censored by the Italians, by the Germans or by both.¹⁰⁶ The answer to this question is closely related to the aim of this chapter, determining the extent of the impact of Fascist norms on the translation of *Bibi*.

The possibility that Villoresi employed the German translation as a mediating version may be due to different reasons. The practice of using mediating translations was very common at the time, and German translations could have been more readily available than the Danish source text. Also, the linguistic expertise of the translator may have influenced the choice. Villoresi's biography and bibliography seem to support this hypothesis. Villoresi 'durante la Prima guerra mondiale si impegnò nell'assistenza dei prigionieri, facilitata dalla sua perfetta conoscenza del tedesco' (Farina 1085) and her corpus of translations includes several German authors (Erich Kästner, among them). Moreover, the 1974 re-edition of the episode *Bibi di sorpresa in sorpresa* by the same publisher is openly indicated as a 'Traduzione dal Tedesco di Emilia Villoresi' and *Bibi in Dänemark* is given as the original text.

and the English translator (26) and left in the original Danish ('Thurø') by Kampmann (17).

¹⁰⁶ 'E a questo punto, se è vero che si tratta di una traduzione dal tedesco, viene da chiedersi: chi è stato a censurare *Bibi*? I tedeschi? Gli italiani? Un pò gli uni e un pò gli altri?' (Kampmann 259).

The comparative analysis conducted on Villoresi's translation, on the German one, and on Kampmann's new version, aims to understand whether cuts and additions are simply inherited from the German translation or if they can be ascribed to an independent intervention made by the Italian translator, and, in the latter case, to what extent norms of the Fascist era had played a role. More specifically, I have looked for evidence of norms governing children's literature before the advent of Fascism and of those introduced by the regime, i.e. mainly pedagogical and communication norms in the former case and ideological ones – social, moral, family, nationalist and religious values – in the latter.

The first part of *Bibi* represents an introduction in which Michaëlis describes Bibi's country, Denmark: borders and topography, the habits and nature of the Danish people, their monarchy, their linguistic and human variety. Here, communication norms play an important role because the narrator talks directly to her readers. In translating, Villoresi adopts two different strategies: she either intervenes in order to ease communication with the Italian readers or just retains the German references. For example, in the passage '[i]mmaginate un po' il Tevere che scorresse improvvisamente lungo via Nazionale e inondasse tutte le strade di Roma' (14), which in the German translation is 'Stellt euch einmal vor, daß die Spree plötzlich Unter den Linden flösse und alle Straßen anfüllte...'

(18), Villoresi adds specific references to Italy.¹⁰⁷ Conversely, the German sentence indicating ‘Im Lande Dänemark leben fast soviele Menschen wie in Berlin’ (12) is translated literally by Villoresi (‘In Danimarca vivono tanti uomini quanti a Berlino’ 10) who keeps the reference to Berlin and also adds a footnote to indicate the exact number of inhabitants of the German capital (‘3 milioni 550 mila’ 10).¹⁰⁸

These examples confirm the influence on the text of communication norms that dictate ‘a translator should act in such a way as to optimize communication, as required by the situation, between all the parties involved’ (Chesterman 69), as well as preliminary norms, or norms dealing with the directness of translation, regarded by Toury as ‘the threshold of tolerance for translating from languages other than the ultimate source language’ (58). These interventions can be ascribed to a process of manipulation rather than censorship,¹⁰⁹ and to the pre-existing system of norms influencing the translation of children’s literature prior to the advent of Fascism. However, in

¹⁰⁷ Fyleman translates this passage as ‘Just imagine what it would be like if the River Thames ran right along Piccadilly and flooded all the streets’ (18).

¹⁰⁸ The English translation opts for a domesticating solution: ‘In the country of Denmark there are about half as many people as there are in London’ (13).

¹⁰⁹ According to Denise Merkle, Carol O’Sullivan et al., ‘While censorship is a manifestation of manipulation, not all manipulation is censorship. Censorship, while sometimes seen in a positive light, invariably involves blockage of a cultural product from entry into a cultural space, the elimination of a product from a cultural space or its modification through attenuation or cutting. Additions to texts without cuts would be an example of manipulation but not censorship. For example, attenuation and deleting to respect “expectancy norms” (Chesterman 1997: 64-66), i.e., to meet target reader expectations of what is acceptable in, say, the translation of children’s literature, is more often than not likened to adaptation rather than to censorship’ (14).

terms of operational norms, understood as those that govern 'the decisions made during the act of translation itself' (Toury 58) and that are observable in the changes, additions and omissions of the translation, there appears to be a deliberate censorial act.

The influence of ideological norms regarding values such as the cult of motherland, and relationships with foreign countries, leads the Italian translator to intervene in the text. In chapter 13, for instance, Villoresi deletes a derogatory comment that the narrator makes about Italian people; Bibi helps two poor children who do not have anything to eat and she infers from their physical appearances and ragged clothes that they must be Polish, Russian, Italian or Gypsies. Kampmann, who does not delete this part, translates as,

Ma poi, in un angolo dietro la porta, vede due bambini che si tengono per mano e hanno le facce scure e i vestiti laceri, e le basta un'occhiata per capire che devono essere polacchi o russi o **italiani** o zingari. (188) [added emphasis]

while Villoresi writes, 'Sono tutti stracciati e, dal colore del viso, giudica al primo sguardo, che debbono essere polacchi o zingari' (206). A look at the German version confirms that this is an intervention that pertains only to the Italian translation, given that the German translator omits only the reference to Russians:

Sie sind sehr zerlumpt und von so dunkler Gesichtsfarbe, daß Bibi auf den ersten Blick erkennt, es müssen Polacken oder **Italiener** oder Zigeuner sein. (267) [added emphasis]

In chapter 6, Bibi meets her grandparents for the first time. She accurately describes their dress and says that their suitcases smell of that kind of leather known as 'Russian'. Kampmann's and the German translation keep the reference: '...il buon odore di quello che si chiama cuoio di Russia' (88); '...nach dem Leder, das man Juchten nannte...' (122). However, Villoresi substitutes the reference to Russia by referring to a different nationality: '...di quella pelle ch'è detta 'bulgaro'...' (95). In chapter 15, her wanderings bring Bibi to the city of Odense, which is well known for being Hans Christian Andersen's birthplace. Comments on the international fame of the Danish writer, and on his young fans, include children from North America and Australia:

A Odense è nato il più grande favolista del mondo. Per fortuna, non è necessario che dica... chi è. Infatti, la cosa buffa è che se si chiede a una bambina in Giappone, a un bambino in Siberia, a un piccolo **cowboy nel Far West americano**, o alla figlia di un contadino australiano: 'Come si chiama l'uomo che ha scritto le fiabe e le storie più belle del mondo?.... (Kampmann 204) [added emphasis]

The German translation reads as:

In Odense ist der größte Märchendichter der Welt geboren. Wer das ist, brauche ich zum Glück nicht zu sagen. Denn das ist ja das

Schöne; wenn ich ein Mädelchen in Japan oder ein Büblein in Sibirien oder **einen kleinen Cowboy weit draußen im wilden Westen von Amerika** oder eine australische Bauerntochter frage: Wie heißt der Mann, der auf der ganzen Welt die allerschönsten Märchen und Geschichten schrieb? (290-1) [added emphasis]

Villoresi eliminates any allusion to the United States by moving the setting to South America and also omits any reference to Australia:

In questa città è nato il più grande novelliere del mondo. Chi sia, non ho bisogno di dirvelo, per fortuna. Se si chiede a una ragazzina in Giappone, o a un bambino in Siberia, o a un **piccolo guardiano di mucche delle selvagge pampas d'America...**(222-3) [added emphasis]

Praising comments about or specific reference to foreign countries such as Russia and the United States, that were negatively or ambiguously perceived by Fascism at that time, might have been considered inconvenient, especially in books for children.

The most evident and systematic intervention that Villoresi makes in the text concerns religious norms and norms related to social issues. Michaëlis devotes chapter 14 entirely to the description of Danish society as divided into aristocrats, clergymen, bourgeois and farmers. More specifically, in describing the relationship between the clergy and farmers, she harshly attacks the members of the former group as:

E così, nonostante sfacchinassero a tutta birra dall'alba al tramonto, rimanevano sempre poveri, perchè ogni briciola che riuscivano a guadagnare se la prendeva la 'Chiesa'...'La Chiesa', si diceva, ma in realtà erano i preti (o il clero, come erano chiamati). Eh sì, perchè la Chiesa non può mica andarsene in giro a reclamare soldi o uova e burro e grano e polli dalla gente. Così lo facevano i preti. E i preti di allora erano completamente diversi da quelli di oggi. Non facevano che ingozzarsi e bere e pensare ad arraffare. In fondo era strano che non scoppiassero, ma forse capitava. I preti erano molto importanti, perchè potevano dare la scomunica, che significa che potevano impedire alla gente di andare in paradiso e di essere seppellita. Tutti avevano un pò di paura dei preti, e cercavano di ingraziarseli. Anche i borghesi. (Kampmann 191-2)

The German translation does not make any cuts:

Sie mußten sich schinden und plagen vom ersten Hahnenschrei bis zum Abendläuten und blieben doch bettelarm, denn das kleinste Bißchen, das sie sich hätten ersparen können, schnappte ihnen die Kirche weg. „Kirche“ sagt man, aber es waren ja die Priester (oder, wie man es auch ausdrückt: „die Geistlichkeit“). Denn eine Kirche kann ja nicht herumgehen und den Leuten Geld abfordern oder Fier und Butter und Korn und Küken. Nein, das taten die Priester.

Die Priester dazumal waren anders als die Pfarrer heute. Sie dachten nur an Essen und Trinken und Geldzusammenscharren. Ein Wunder, daß sie nicht platzten – aber vielleicht taten es auch einige. Priester, das bedeutete damals schrecklich viel; denn ein Priester konnte ja andere Menschen in den Bann tun, das hieß: man durfte nicht

begraben werden und konnte nicht in den Himmel kommen. Darum hatten alle ein bißchen Angst vor den Priestern und bemühten sich, sich gut mit ihnen zu stellen. Auch die Bürger. (272-3)

Instead, Villoresi deletes any direct criticism against clergymen and their habits:

Insomma, avevano l'obbligo di logorarsi dal primo mattino all'Angelus della sera per rimaner miserabili. Quel poco che potevano mettere da parte, se lo prendeva la Chiesa. Si dice la Chiesa per modo di dire. In realtà era il clero, assai diverso da quello di oggidi. (Villoresi 211)

Sarcastic comments about the priests' greediness and vices are also omitted later in the chapter:

I preti ricevono uno stipendio fisso, e adesso non rischiano più di scoppiare a furia di mangiare e bere troppo, tutt'altro, poveretti! (Kampmann 196)

Die Pfarrer haben ihr festes Gehalt und kommen nicht mehr in die Gefahr, infolge übermäßigen Essens und Trinkens zu platzen – alles andere als das! (278)

I parroci hanno il loro stipendio fisso. (Villoresi 214)

In the same chapter, Villoresi also avoids further criticism of social disparities and differences between poor and rich people in relation to burial customs:

Al cimitero la povera gente si deve accontentare della terra peggiore, dove perfino l'erba stenta a crescere, e di una tomba talmente piccola che la bara c'entra a malapena. I ricchi, invece, vengono sepolti nel

bel terriccio scuro, con tanto di salice piangente, un'inferriata tutt'intorno e una panchina fissata al tronco dell'albero con una catena, quasi fosse un cane da guardia. Inoltre, sopra le tombe dei ricchi viene sistemata una pesante lastra di marmo, proprio come il fermacarte che si mette sui fogli della scrivania. Per contro, ai poveri tocca solo un bastoncino con un numero, e nient'altro.

Dovete però sapere che oltre ai poveri e ai ricchi, ci sono anche i gran signori. E questi non possono essere seppelliti in un normale cimitero insieme a chicchessia – infatti si spostano in carrozza per non mescolarsi a tutti gli straccioni che camminano per le strade – ecco, questi vengono seppelliti nelle cappelle. Le cappelle sono quelle salette che ci sono nelle chiese. Oppure vengono sepolti giù nella cripta, che è la cantina della chiesa, e 'cripta' suona molto meglio di 'cantina'. Sia le salette sia la cantina del Duomo di Roskilde sono stipate dei più grandi signori di tutta la Danimarca, re e regine, e principi e principesse. Riposano in imponenti feretri di marmo, però alcuni stanno in bare foderate di velluto di seta e rivestite d'argento, e vengono esibiti a pagamento come le statue del museo delle cere. La maggior parte della gente pensa che sia una cosa sopraffina, e sarebbe disposta a morire due volte pur di ricevere, almeno in un'occasione, una sepoltura tanto distinta.

Chi immaginerebbe che esista una sepoltura ancora più raffinata di quella in una cappella o in una cripta? E invece c'è. Anzi, ce ne sono ben due. Una è dentro le piramidi, che gli antichi egizi impiegavano anni e anni a costruire, e che oggi vengono usate per essere scalate dalle persone che visitano l'Egitto. Solo i faraoni – come si chiamavano i re dell'Egitto, quando c'erano i re – venivano sistemati nelle piramidi. (Kampmann 53-4)

The German translation keeps this long description as:

Arme Leute müssen sich auf dem Kirchhof mit der allerschlechtesten Erde begnügen, wo nicht einmal Gras wächst, und ihre Grabstätte ist so klein, daß kaum Platz für den Sarg ist. Reiche Leute dagegen kommen in feine schwarze Gartenerde. Da wachsen Trauerweiden, ein Eisengitter umgibt das Grab, und an einem Baumstamm ist eine Gartenbank angeschlossen wie ein Kettenhund. Außerdem bekommen die reichen Leute einen schweren Marmorstein über sich, gerade wie man auf dem Schreibtisch einen Briefbeschwerer auf die Papiere legt, um sie festzuhalten; die armen Leute jedoch bekommen einen Holzpflöck mit dem Namen, weiter nichts.

Außer den Armen und den Reichen gibt es ja noch die ganz vornehmen Leute. Die können nicht auf einem gewöhnlichen Kirchhof mit Krethi und Plethi zusammen begraben liegen – sie sind ja vorher auch immer Wagen gefahren, um nicht mit allen möglichen schäbigen Menschen zusammen auf der Straße zu gehen; die also werden in einer Kapelle beigesetzt. Kapellen nennt man die kleinen Zimmer in einer Kirche. Oder man begräbt sie auch in Krypten, das sind Kirchenteller, aber Krypta klingt feiner als Keller. Sowohl in den kleinen Zimmern als auch im Keller der Domkirche von Roskilde ist es gedrängt voll von den allervornehmsten Leuten aus ganz Dänemark, von Königen und Königinnen, Prinzen und Prinzessinnen. Sie liegen in mächtigen Marmorsärgen, oder auch in Särgen, die mit Seidensamt bezogen und mit Silber beschlagen sind, und sie werden für Geld gezeigt wie Figuren in einem Wachsfigurenkabinett. Die meisten Menschen finden das so über alle Maßen sein, daß sie allen Ernstes gerne zweimal sterben würden, wenn sie nur dafür das eine Mal so vornehm begraben werden könnten – aber das geht nun nicht.

Sollte man glauben, daß es noch etwa Feineres gibt, als in einer Kapelle oder in einer Krypta zu liegen? Ja, das gibt es. Zwei Begräbnisarten sind noch feiner. Erstens: in einer Pyramide begraben zu werden. Viele, viele Jahre brauchten die alten Ägypter, um eine solche Pyramide zu bauen. Jetzt sind die Pyramiden bloß noch dazu da, damit die Leute, die nach Ägypten reisen, darauf herumklettern können. Nur die Pharaonen – so nannte man damals die König von Ägypten – wurden in Pyramiden begraben. (74-6)

In Villoresi, only a brief remark on differences in burial habits between poor and rich people is kept, but details about the way in which upper class people are buried in private chapels in churches, and especially the ironic tone with which Michaëlis comments on these practices, are entirely left out.

Quando è morta, la povera gente deve accontentarsi di poca terra grama, con un pezzo di legno per il nome, e basta. I ricchi, invece, vengono sepolti sotto pesanti lapidi di marmo, o – se sono celebri – nelle cappelle delle chiese. Il duomo di Roskilde è zeppo di personaggi importanti dell'intera Danimarca, di re e regine, di principi e principesse. I quali giacciono in grandi sarcofaghi di marmo, e la gente paga per andarli a vedere. Ma ci sono due modi d'esser sepolti, ancor più da signori. L'uno entro una piramide, come i faraoni dell'antico Egitto (impiegarono tanti e tanti anni a costruirle e oggi servono per lo spasso della gente, che si diverte ad arrampicarvisi su). (Villoresi 60)

The Italian translation of 1931 also deletes the description of disparities between aristocracy and the bourgeoisie in terms of land distribution:

Una tenuta è un pezzo di terra, a volte talmente grande che si impiega un giorno intero a percorrerlo a cavallo, però senza andare al galoppo. Altre volte, invece, bisogna essere in due per potelro percorrere a cavallo in due giorni, e al gran galoppo. E quando questo pezzo di terra era diventato nobile, non poteva mai più diventare borghese. Proprio come un cavallo non può ridiventare puledro. O una gallina pulcino. (Kampmann 194)

Ein Gut ist ein Fetzen Land, manchmal nicht größer, als daß ein Reiter bequem in einem Tag um es herumreiten kann, aber zuweilen so groß, daß zwei Reiter zwei Tage dazu brauchen, um ihn in gestredtem Galopp zu umreiten. (seite 277) Wenn so ein Fetzen Land einmal adlig geworden war, konnte es nie wieder bürgerlich werden. So wenig ein Pferd wieder Fohlen und ein Huhn wieder Küken werden kann. (276)

As mentioned earlier, Bibi is a highly independent and courageous young girl and as such she often transgresses her father's bans and does not accept the discipline imposed at school. However, despite the open support by Fascism for values such as paternal authority and obedience, in Villoresi's translation there is no intervention made in this sense. This aspect of Michaëlis' books are criticised only years later, when the control on books for children become stricter. So far, I have showed how Michaëlis' book, purged of elements considered as incompatible with the target literature and the regime's ideology, was at first positively received in Italy both by critics in line with the regime and by those who were not. However, in 1938 at the *Convegno Nazionale per la letteratura infantile e*

giovanile, the *Bibi* series would be officially banned. What happened in between?

The fact that the *Bibi* stories were at first almost universally welcomed by critics in Italy is due, according to Salviati (15) and Ziliotto (260), to the metaphorical richness and adventurous plots of the books that kept the strong democratic and unconventional message of the novels hidden to the inquisitorial eye of the censor (16). As mentioned earlier in the chapter, censorship and a stricter control on literature started to be systematically applied by the regime in the 1930s. Thus, in the light of the regime's negative reaction to the series manifested in 1938, the favourable response garnered by these stories before then may be ascribed both to a first phase in which the regime showed more tolerance towards foreign books for children and the values they expressed, and to the general ambivalence of attitudes towards foreign literature under Fascism. In both cases, it may also have been the case that Villoresi's interventions in the text had already got rid of those elements of the book that might have raised concerns in censors – and that *Bibi* was a profitable investment for its publisher.

In 1938, at the *Convegno Nazionale per la letteratura infantile e giovanile*, Nazareno Padellaro justified his harsh criticism of Michaëlis' works and their eventual banning precisely on the grounds of the contravention of those norms

which had not influenced Villoresi's translation. In the *Bibi* books, as he claimed, no sense of paternal authority could be found. Therefore, reading about the strong libertarian character of the Danish girl could, in his opinion, turn children against their parents:

Manca nei libri della Micaelis il senso dell'autorità paterna, morale retaggio tipicamente latino; l'obbedienza non esiste; tutto dipende dalla parola data, parola facile da mantenere solo nei libri. Moralissimi in apparenza, essi possono portare a un distacco del cuore del ragazzo da quello dei genitori, per la intensa libertà offerta all'eroina.
(41)

Padellaro's criticism, which he based on educational norms, was, in fact, the result of the intensification of the process of *fascistizzazione* of the school system, together with the enforcement of censorship against foreign books.

Worries due to the international reputation of Michaëlis and to her relation with the German regime might have also played a role in leading to the ban of her books. Ida Salvati tells an interesting anecdote about Michaëlis and her relationship with Fascism. In 1934, the writer sent a letter to the Italian government asking for permission and funds to visit Italy and gather material for a book for the *Bibi* series set in the peninsula. The rejection of her request was apparently made on the basis of the results of research on the Danish writer

commissioned by Mussolini.¹¹⁰ This letter depicts the Danish author as a possible source of problems for the regime.¹¹¹ It is likely that before then the author's political views were still unknown to the regime. As mentioned earlier, in the 1920s publishers were still relatively free in terms of foreign rights acquisitions, and often operations of self-censorship would avoid any further problem with the regime. However, it is possible that when more information about Michaëlis reached the regime's higher echelons, the idea of an author (who was well known in Europe for her democratic, emancipatory and feminist ideas) visiting Italy as a prospective site for a new book about an independent female child character such as Bibi was considered with suspicion.

Furthermore, Michaëlis' reputation in Germany as a strenuous opponent of Hitler's regime could also have led to

¹¹⁰ The letter said: '...è risultato che la signora Michaëlis ha scritto nel 1910 un libro intitolato "L'età pericolosa" opera redatta con criteri molto discutibili e che nella stampa mondiale ebbe una eco scandalistica; che a lei è dovuta una vasta campagna contro Gabriele D'Annunzio per la nota questione di Villa Tjode sul Garda, campagna di stampa che ebbe varie ripercussioni specie in Danimarca, in Germania e in Austria. Infine, che il R. Ministro a Copenaghen, interpellato per una richiesta analoga a quella contemplata dal suddetto appunto di codesta On. Presidenza, richiesta pervenuta alla fine dello scorso anno per il tramite della Società degli Autori ed Editori, aveva espresso parere contrario all'accoglimento dei desideri della signora Michaëlis' (qtd. in Salviati, "Una Bibi per Mussolini" 16).

¹¹¹ Karin Michaëlis was already known in Italy and elsewhere as an author for adults thanks to the success she had achieved with her book *Den farlige Alder: Breve og Dagbogsoptegnelser* (1910). Both the English (*The Dangerous Age: Letters and Fragments from a Woman's Diary*) and the Italian translations (*L'età pericolosa*) were published in 1911. The international fame gained by that work was due not only to the literary mastery of the author, but also to the fact that Michaëlis explores, through the letters and personal notes of the protagonist, Elsie, delicate and controversial themes concerning women. After more than twenty years of marriage, the protagonist leaves her husband to live on her own on an island. She ultimately regrets her choice, but only after it is too late to regain her previous life.

the ban. In her house in Denmark, Michaëlis hosted friends such as Rilke, Einstein, and Brecht, among others, and other people persecuted by Nazism. She paid for her independence of thought with exile, in 1939, when she refused Goebbels' request that she write a book for children in support of Nazism (Lowenthal, "C'è del buono in Danimarca").

The ambivalent attitude under which Fascism at first welcomed and praised a book that it would subsequently ban was due not only to specific historical circumstances, but also to the necessity of the regime making different norms compatible, and to negotiate with other parties. In terms of business norms, for instance, in the first part of the 1930s, the regime showed more tolerance towards the publication of translations because they represented profitable investments. The employment of censorship and extra-textual strategies of control was still considered effective in order to balance these concessions and thus to weaken the inconvenient democratic message of the Danish series in the eyes of the readers. Later, in the 1930s, however, these measures were considered no longer sufficient to secure the firm control of the regime over culture and on the lives of people.¹¹² Ideological norms then began prevailing over all others.

¹¹² 'Il regime tollerò la letteratura straniera fin tanto che poté accomodarla nel suo disegno egemonico di costruzione di una cultura per un popolo che doveva imparare a pensare fascista. Esercitò un controllo altresì più rigoroso, quando si trovò costretto a dover aumentare la pressione ideologica e politica sulle istituzioni culturali' (Billiani 152).

Conclusion

The case of Italy under Fascism is certainly exceptional, but it is still an emblematic example of norms examined through different sources, whether colliding, modifying or dominating. In the wake of the general debate on the increasing number of translations present in the Italian market, which were perceived by the regime as a threat against Italian literature, translated children's books were not spared. Yet, as happened in the case of literature for adults, no systematic operation of intervention on translations was conducted. In this respect, the case of *Bibi* has served to show how fruitful the investigation of norms of children's literature, both indigenous and translated, can be in revealing aspects of the ambivalent attitude adopted by the regime. It illustrated how the different political phases and strategies of control adopted by the regime were reflected in the way children's literature was imported, translated, read and reviewed at the time.

In the following chapter, I will look at the period from the end of the Second World War to present. I will examine the target context of Italian literature for children to observe how, and through which channels, Italian literature still weighed down by strong pedagogical and ideological interests could interact with innovative imported works. I will then move on to discuss the impact that a new way of producing and distributing children's books due to the globalisation of the market has had

on the interaction between translations and indigenous children's literature in Italy from the 1980s onwards.

Chapter 5

Translated Children's Literature in Italy from Post-war to Present Day: Channels of 'Interference' and the Impact of Globalisation

Introduction

One of the main aspects of the Italian context established in the previous chapters is the prevailing conservative tendency manifested by Italian children's literature throughout its history, which has strongly affected the interaction between translated and indigenous literature. In this setting, I observed distinct phenomena. One was the attempt of Italian children's literature to affiliate and adapt imported works to its own didactic and moralising tradition. Introducing further complexity to the field is the question of Italian women writers and translators of children's literature, particularly the contradictions and difficulties they faced when they tried to balance the conflicting forces of domestication and foreignisation, represented by the clash of Italian tradition against foreign innovation. The Fascist period, on the other hand, presented us with an extreme case of pressure exerted on translations, which were meant to adapt foreign works to the regime's expectations. Continuing this line, the present chapter covers the period from the end of the

Second World War until today, in order to explore the manner in which the transactions between translations and indigenous children's literature responded to the changes which occurred in children's literature in Italy during that period.

From the end of the Second World War onwards, part of Italian literature for children reacted to the rigidity of the previous years by gradually opening up to less conservative models of children's literature, and becoming more receptive to external input. The first section of this chapter will focus on some of the channels through which this openness was encouraged, and foreign influences could affect national literature, despite many obstacles. While some publishers and editors, through forward-looking choices of works to be imported, offered a direct way for new models and ideas to enter the target literature, indirectly a change inherent to indigenous literature itself occurred thanks to the work of specific original writers, whose work would become an underground vehicle for the import of foreign material. Even-Zohar's dichotomy of 'dependent vs. independent systems' (79) and his concept of 'interference' (54) offer a model of the conditions that cause a literary system to open up to external influences, and of the dynamics set off by a successful process of 'interference' (54).

The second part of the chapter is devoted to a more recent phase of Italian children's literature, beginning in the

1980s. It will focus on the changes that the strengthening of the publishing sector of children's books in a globalised context, and the consequent growth of its market, have produced on the creation, distribution and reception of indigenous and translated books for children in the Italian context. One of the effects of those general changes has been the increase in the number of translations of books for children that enter the Italian market with the consequence of affecting the relationship between imported and indigenous works. In this chapter, this issue will be addressed in the light of the different reactions that this new situation has produced in the 'institution of children's literature' (Zipes 45). Some sectors of children's literature have perceived the greater exposure of Italian literature for children to a more globalised market as a push towards consumerism rather than the development of a more varied literature for young people. The last part of the chapter makes use of Italian children's literature in a global context, arguing that despite concern about consumerism, this globalising trend allows Italian books for children to cross national borders.

1. The Interaction between Indigenous and Translated Children's Literature in Post-war Italy: Direct and Indirect Influences

Political, social and cultural expectations created by the end of the Fascist regime and the birth of the Italian Republic in 1946

could not but have repercussions on Italian literature for children, a literature that became central to a wider discourse on education. A renewed interest in a literature addressing the younger generation, as the future representatives of the newborn democracy, was stimulated throughout subsequent decades by new scholarly studies, conferences, the creation of specialised journals, and by certain writers for adults (Calvino, among others) who turned their creativity to the field.

Factors such as the economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s, with the parallel increase in consumerism, the raise of the school leaving age to 14, a process of urbanisation (partly due to the migration flow from the south of Italy to the north), and, lastly, the spread of television, radio and cinema, considerably influenced the production of children's literature from the 1950s onwards (Boero and De Luca 240). Additionally, in the 1960s children's literature took its first steps in the world of academia: in 1962, the *Settore di ricerca sulla letteratura giovanile* was set up in Padova and in 1967, the first course in *Storia della letteratura per l'infanzia* was opened. The *Fiera Internazionale del Libro per l'Infanzia e la Gioventù* was born in Bologna in 1964.

The 1960s and 1970s were also seen as years of change for Italian children's literature; the field was in ferment.¹¹³

¹¹³ The publication of Rodari's *Grammatica della fantasia* (1973), of Bruno Munari's series *Tantibambini* for Einaudi, of Antonio Faeti's *Guardare le figure*, and the opening in Milan of Roberto and Gianna Denti's bookshop *La*

Publishing houses started new series for young readers, such as Emme, La Coccinella, and Editori Riuniti. Pursuit of a better understanding of literature for children and its real role in Italian culture and society was conducted in journals such as *Lo specchio del libro per ragazzi* (1963) and *Il Minuzzolo* (1965).¹¹⁴ A perceptible change in the socio-cultural notion and literary image of the child, which took place in the same period, was another fundamental element that contributed to the future development of children's literature. Gianni Rodari's ability to perceive and interpret changes as they took place singled him out amongst the main instruments of the revitalisation of Italian children's culture and literature. He put forward an innovative didactic perspective based on a new attitude and approach to children at school, within the family, and also in a wider socio-cultural system, by taking into account the essential and active role they play in society.

Despite these circumstances, Italian literature for children was still at the mercy of contrasting forces. Progressive calls for a new status to be attributed to indigenous literature were thwarted by the strong conservative resistance exerted by the educational system, with its distrust of new models imported through different pedagogical or literary paradigms and translations. Since this conservative tendency was very strong,

Libreria dei Ragazzi (1972) are considered as the milestones of that period (Boero, "La sfida" 185).

¹¹⁴ In 1977, *Il Minuzzolo* became *LG Argomenti*, a publication which tackled different, often controversial subjects with its monographic issues (Langella 57-8).

innovative influences could at first be applied only to a more peripheral stratum of the system of literature for children. The centre of the system, still significantly affected by pedagogical and didactic norms, stayed more resistant to changes. Moreover, it became clear in the 1960s that educational institutions were still unable to keep pace with the editorial boom which was taking place. Schools and their agents remained anchored to earlier didactic, aesthetic, and moral norms (Valeri 136). This increased the divergence between the innovative push promoted, for example, by courageous publishing initiatives, including the importation of translated texts, and forces still bound to an old school of pedagogy, incapable of benefiting from those changes.

As a journalist, Rodari had already denounced the anachronism of the school texts of the time back in the 1940s. According to him, those books had not been updated for a new historical and political epoch and a different concept of education since the end of the War, although they had been purged of elements relating to the exaltation of Fascism (Boero and De Luca 220). In the 1970s, another debate on the status of primary schoolbooks led to a condemnation of their quality. The main objection stated that in representing and promoting to children an outdated image of Italy, the school was preventing them from having a clear picture of contemporary reality. The

most famous intervention in the discussion was Umberto Eco's introduction to *I pampini bugiardi* (1972):

I libri di testo dicono insomma delle bugie, educano il ragazzo a una falsa realtà, gli riempiono la testa di luoghi comuni, di *platitudes*, di atteggiamenti codini e acritici. Quel che è peggio, compiono quest'opera di mistificazione attenendosi ai più vietati cliché della pedagogia repressiva ottocentesca, per pigrizia o incapacità dei compilatori. Questi libri sono manuali per piccoli consumatori acritici, per membri della maggioranza silenziosa, per qualunque in miniatura, deamicisiani in ritardo che fanno elemosina a un povero singolo e affamano masse di lavoratori col sorriso sulle labbra e l'obolo alla mano. (8)

In this general context, there were some who realised that the role played by translations could be essential in compensating for the flaws of a national literature that, apart from some outstanding figures (Rodari and Calvino among others), was still bound to the old school of pedagogy. According to the distinction made by Even-Zohar between independent and dependent literary systems (79), an independent system is 'heterogeneous'; it can count on 'a growing inventory of alternative options'. It is not in need of external loans, and experiences constant growth, and changes, 'if they can be controlled by the system, are signs of a vital, rather than a degenerate, system' (26-7). By contrast, a

dependent literature is weak, and thus '...unable to function by confining itself to its home repertoire only' (81).

It can be said that Italian literature for children was in the Post-war period, perceived by many as prevalently a dependent literature. However, new requirements could not be ignored. This can be the case of a literature whose '...conditions within it have created a certain situation which cannot be dealt with by the relevant literature exclusively or mainly by means of its own sources' (Even-Zohar 55). This especially applies to minority literatures (56), and Italian children's literature could be classified as such, since it was dependent in many aspects on other systems, as well as suffering from a condition of cultural inferiority within the main Italian literary and wider cultural system. With a stronger 'openness' to diversity, foreign literature can be regarded as a 'potential source available'. Awareness of a deficiency in internal literary production leads to the adoption of resources from other systems as a possible solution. Resources can be found within a system which is part of the same polysystem or external to it. In Italy at that time the agents that most favoured this process of influence seem to have been those who took the risk to challenge the traditional idea of literature for children in Italy. They did this either directly, by recourse to foreign literature that provided compensation for the scarcity at home,

or indirectly, by spreading foreign models and ideas through original writing.

At this stage, it seems useful to investigate the mechanisms by which dependent systems, such as the Italian, introduce translations as a means to gain strength. According to Even-Zohar, 'Interference can be defined as a relation(ship) between literatures, whereby a certain literature A (a source literature) may become a source of direct or indirect loans for another literature B (a target literature)' (54). Interference, in this sense, is generated by specific circumstances inherent in the target culture (63). When a target context finds itself in need of new tools and thus makes use of an external source to enrich itself, the 'availability' and 'accessibility' of a source system become two necessary conditions:

Interference normally occurs when a target system does not possess a sufficient repertoire for newly needed functions, or is prevented from using an extant, even a variegated, repertoire, because of the latter's inadequacy (to fulfil the said functions). The need for these functions is generated by the conditions prevailing in the given polysystem, which are correlated with the overall polysystem of culture...whenever in need of innovation and unable to use its own (extant or non-extant) repertoire(s) to that end, a system tends to make use of whatever repertoire is within reach. Accessibility (for a would-be target system) is therefore a condition for a system to become a source system. Though accessibility may result from physical (co-territorial) contacts, such as domination, pressure, and/or

prestige, it is nevertheless ultimately determined by the cultural promptness ("openness"/ "readiness") of the target system to consider a potential source "available". (A distinction is thus made between "accessibility", i.e., the possibility of getting hold of a source, and "availability", i.e., the legitimacy of implementing what the state of accessibility can offer). (Even-Zohar 9)

In particular, in the next sections I intend to focus on the channels, direct and indirect, through which this influence was made possible during the decades following the end of the war.

The case of direct interference is that of publishers or editors who met the need of indigenous literature to be enriched by new influences, by importing works which were substantially different from coeval Italian models. In 1958, Donatella Ziliotto (1932-), an editor, original writer and translator, created and directed the series *Il Martin Pescatore* for the publishing house Vallecchi. Books such as *Pippi Långstrump*, *Professor Branestawm*, *Filemon Faltenreich*, *Der kleine Wasserman*, *The Borrowers*, among others, were translated into Italian bringing about ‘...un’apertura ulteriore verso l’europa e il mondo’ (Boero and De Luca 251). Bianca Pitzorno, a well-known Italian writer for children, remembers how much Ziliotto’s series influenced her original works:

Il primo titolo che incontrai fu *Magia d’estate* di Tove Jansson, una storia di *troll*, e in particolare della famiglia Mumin, illustrata dalla stessa autrice....Così feci conoscenza con Astrid Lindgren, scoprii la

Svezia, e mi resi conto che gli svedesi erano miei fratelli nello spirito molto più dei popoli mediterranei....Già mi ero innamorata di Selma Lagerlof....Sempre nel "Martin pescatore" incontrai una piccola extraterrestre di nome Mo protagonista di *Piovuta dal cielo* di Henry Winterfield, che anni dopo mi ispirò la figura del/la mio/a *Extraterrestre alla pari*, battezzato/a Mo in suo onore. (Storia 111)

Ziliotto also embodies the case of an original writer whose work permeated Italian literature with new and progressive elements closer to foreign experiences. In 1979, she wrote *// bambino di plastica*, which

racconta di una madre che vuole un bambino standard, educato, perfetto. Libro che, a causa della sferzante critica alla famiglia, risultava essere effettivamente scandaloso ed incredibile per quei tempi. Suscitò molto scalpore tra i benpensanti, ma piacque molto a Gianni Rodari. In realtà attraverso la critica, tra l'ironico e il satirico, intendevo recuperare l'autenticità dei rapporti familiari. (Ziliotto, "Rivolta" 169)

Ziliotto's works narrate stories from the point of view of the child. In this way, unlike most Italian children's authors of the time, she talked directly to children. Traditionally, children's stories are narrated from the point of view of an adult, omniscient narrator who usually provides comments on the events and sometimes a moral teaching at the end of the narrative. Ziliotto was innovative in that in some of her stories

the narrator is not an adult but a child-protagonist who describes the world through their own eyes. In this light, it is not surprising that the first translation she chose to publish was *Pippi Calzelunghe* (1958), and she herself translated it from the original Swedish. Through Lindgren's story she wanted to convey a message of independence to Italian girls in order for them to develop more critical thinking. Her whole writing career has since then evolved in that direction. According to Denti, the success of Pippi's translation was surprising, given that the model of child that this book put forward was not supported by the majority of Italian writers at the time (265). Ziliotto herself talks about her choice to publish this story:

...una scelta che mi sembrava coerente con il desiderio di fornire ai bambini le armi per difendersi dalla prepotenza e dall'incomprensione degli adulti. In particolare attraverso Pippi anche le bambine italiane seppero che potevano sognare di diventare forti e indipendenti e aspirare, da grandi, a scaraventare lontano da sé tutto ciò che poteva costituire una prepotenza o un ostacolo alla libertà di essere, di agire, di pensare. ("Rivolta" 176)

Lindgren's character of Pippi can be brought closer to that of Karin Michaëlis' Bibi, translated into Italian, as we have seen, during the 1930s.¹¹⁵ Pippi and Bibi share some characteristics: they are girls, they are both independent, strong and brave. The response to the *Bibi* series during

¹¹⁵ See Chapter Four.

Fascism was certainly affected by the extraordinariness of that historical situation. However, it was evident that Michaëlis' work did not fit the pedagogical model that prevailed at the time both in pre-existing literature for children and in that promoted by Fascism. At the end of the 1930s, when Fascist censorship became stricter, the *Bibi* series was openly criticised and banned by the regime. Ziliotto republished Michaëlis' stories two decades later, when she started a new editorial venture. This time, there were other ideological forces playing a part in what was thought of as appropriate literature for children. Fascism, with its nationalistic and pedagogical leanings had disappeared and new movements, like feminism, had appeared on the scene. From 1968, the basis of authority, either moral or political, began to be strongly challenged. Naturally, the pedagogical model had changed, and therefore stories of girls as protagonists, girls who were independent and thought for themselves, were more welcome.

In 1987, Ziliotto became the editor of the new series for youngsters *Gl'Istrici*¹¹⁶ for the publishing house Salani. Other books which were not well-received when published decades before were, with this series, re-presented to the Italian public (Ziliotto, "La rivolta" 176). Thus, Ziliotto proved tenacious in

¹¹⁶ On the back cover of the books of this series we read 'Dice una leggenda che gl'Istrici scagliano i loro aculei, come frecce, su chi li stuzzica. Provate a stuzzicare i nostri istrici ed essi vi pungeranno: colpiranno la vostra fantasia e il vostro cuore divertendovi, affascinandovi e spaventandovi. Li abbiamo cercati in tutto il mondo e ora sono qui per pungervi, pungervi' (Ziliotto, "Rivolta" 176).

republishing authors whose translations were not fully appreciated, for different reasons, in the previous years. Nordic authors, in particular, had not gained much success when first presented in the series *Il martin pescatore* in the 1950s and 1960s. Ziliotto ascribes this to a progressive image of the child that did not match the coeval Italian one (176).

Ziliotto has regularly privileged Nordic authors such as Tove Jansson, Astrid Lindgren, Karin Michaëlis, and new genres such as horror, detective stories and fantasy (“Rivolta” 177). She opened the series by republishing two of Roald Dahl’s works (*The Witches* and *The Twits*). Dahl’s stories also reflect Ziliotto’s philosophy towards childhood and its literature, because, as she says, Dahl ‘...fornisce ai bambini le armi “psicologiche” contro le prepotenze del mondo adulto’ (“Rivolta” 177). The favourable reception of Dahl allowed new literary models and themes to enter Italian children’s literature. Antonio Faeti highlights the importance of the publication, through *Gl’Istrici*, of Dahl’s books:

Scoppiò il caso Dahl e, insolitamente, se ne occuparono anche quotidiani e settimanali che tacciono, per un’abitudine religiosamente seguita sempre, dell’esistenza di una letteratura per l’infanzia. Aumentarono le traduzioni di autori stranieri, gli inglesi in particolare...Le collane acquisirono stimolanti diversificazioni tematiche...E poi si affrontarono, in certi casi proprio per la prima volta, argomenti sempre taciuti...(Diamanti 283-4)

Dahl's books imported a model that was followed in Italy by many original authors. Somehow the 'authorisation' coming from a more internationally established literature gave a further pretext to break target culture rules.

This is also what the publisher Rosellina Archinto (1933-) had in mind when she launched her own publishing house, Emme,¹¹⁷ in 1966. This initiative was born, as she states, from two main premises: the recognition of Italian children's literature as a mediocre literature and her own experience of other literatures, such as the North American one. In realising the disparity between the conservativeness of Italian books for children and the exciting new wave of books, especially illustrated ones, coming from other literatures, she ended up with the idea of founding her own publishing house. Italian literature continued its resistance to modernisation, and as a result, Archinto's importations were looked upon mostly with suspicion and distrust: 'Li consideravano molto stravaganti, tanto che negli anni Settanta dicevano che erano libri per i figli degli architetti' (Archinto 251-2). Today, however, Archinto's operation is referred to by other publishers as unique in the history of Italian publishers.

¹¹⁷ In 1986, Archinto sold Emme to another publisher. This brought about, at the beginning of the 1990s, the creation of a new editorial group through the joining of EL, Emme edizioni, and Einaudi Ragazzi. Orietta Fatucci, the editor of this new group, inherited and followed Archinto's editorial line (Sossi 90-1) keeping an attentive eye on foreign literature. In 1977, while working for the publishing house EL, she had brought into Italy works from British, German, Dutch and Japanese children's literature (Sossi 36).

Archinto imported books considered as revolutionary for both their text and illustrations even in the countries where they had been originally published (Archinto 267-8): 'Attraverso la Emme di quegli anni passa un'Italia che vuole guardare all'Europa e al mondo e basta sfogliare una quindicina di volumi usciti nei primi anni Settanta per rendersi conto del valore della proposta' (Boero and De Luca 288). Two initiatives are among the best examples supporting the previous quotation: the publication by Archinto of the Italian translations of Leo Lionni's *Little Blue and Little Yellow* (1959) as *Piccolo blu e piccolo giallo* in 1967, and that of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963) as *Nel paese dei mostri selvaggi* in 1963.

In an interview, Archinto recalls her first encounter with *Little Blue and Little Yellow* in the 1960s. While in the US for study reasons, she came across Lionni's work in a bookshop and was fascinated by it:

In Italia eravamo abituati a libri per l'infanzia molto tradizionali e l'idea di vedere una storia raccontata con macchie di colori mi aveva molto attratto. Comperai quel piccolo libro senza immaginare quanto sarebbe stato importante nella mia futura professione (qtd. in Schiaffino n. pag.).

Years later, in 1966, when she set up her publishing house, she asked Lionni to collaborate with her. He accepted

and their partnership was inaugurated with the Italian translation of *Little Blue and Little Yellow*. As Archinto claims, the reaction of the audience was not surprising.

Naturalmente in Italia ebbe vita difficile. I genitori italiani erano perplessi di fronte ad un modo di raccontare così inusuale. Potrei quasi dire che il successo del libro è stato decretato dai bambini più che dai genitori. Se oggi, a distanza di tanti anni, *Piccolo Blu e Piccolo Giallo* continua ad ottenere importanti riconoscimenti, probabilmente perché esprime valori forti, ancora validi per le nuove generazioni e perché, come tutti sappiamo, i buoni libri non hanno tempo. (qtd. in Schiaffino)

By importing *Piccolo blu e piccolo giallo* Archinto tried to introduce a different type of illustrated book addressing young readers. The use of abstract art to tell children a story able to express fundamental values, but without any moralising end, was a model that differed from the dominant pedagogical norms supported by most educators and parents in Italian literature for children. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, a process of change was already at work and some original authors such as Gianni Rodari were putting forward a different way of talking to children, not any longer through the mediation of parents, but addressing them directly by means of new communication tools. This is exactly what Lionni had been doing already. Sossi observes that, in the 1970s, Emme imported the best available illustrated foreign books:

Se oggi in Italia l'illustrazione per l'infanzia può affondare le sue radici nella storia dell'arte e guardare senza paura alle nuove correnti artistiche, il merito e' anche di Rosellina Marconi Archinto, la prima 'grande donna' dell'editoria per ragazzi che con geniale intuito ha saputo comprendere il 'nuovo' e con straordinario coraggio imprenditoriale ha aperto nuove strade alla cultura Italiana per l'infanzia impedendone un pericoloso isolamento dai fermenti innovativi che attraversavano l'Europa. (87)

According to Claire Nebet, the general movement of ideas at the end of the 1960s brought children's literature into a new phase. Europe and the United States saw the development of a literature that dared to discuss themes such as death or sexuality and that reflected social issues:

La letteratura per la gioventù era sempre rimasta ai margini dei dibattiti pubblici, ora questa trasformazione radicale della rappresentazione tradizionale dei valori trascina con sé reazioni, processi, accusa, sovversione. (Nebet 67)

In France, for example, this line was pursued by the American editor Harlin Quist and the French author Francois Ruy-Vidal, who put their expertise together to publish albums for children considered as the expression of the French avant-garde movement at the time (68). These books were both acclaimed and feared for their innovative drive and their

challenge of the norms governing coeval literature for children (Paley 111). Archinto aimed to do in Italy what Quist and Vidal were doing in France. They were both initially inspired by their admiration of works such as Sendak's, and by the new emerging image of the child. Translations played a major role in this move:

Per quanto riguarda la Emme, ha basato interamente la sua politica editoriale su queste traduzioni, soprattutto americane, inglesi, francesi: quelle di Sendak dal 1963 e di Tomi Ungerer dal 1967. L'editrice italiana farà anche conoscere gli avanguardisti francesi come Francois Ruy-Vidal riprendendo l'adattamento francese di *Pierino Porcospino*. (Nebet 70)

Such a fruitful exchange between French and Italian literature for children is at present pursued by Archinto's daughter, Francesca Archinto, editor of the publishing house Babalibri, created in Italy by the French publisher *École des loisirs* at the end of the 1990s.¹¹⁸

As already mentioned, Emme also published the translation of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* in

¹¹⁸ Francesca Archinto tells how, 'Con Babalibri ho sempre cercato di portare avanti un discorso di qualità e che allo stesso tempo rifletta l'identità della casa editrice. E questo paga, senza alcun dubbio. Certo, ho una grande fortuna poiché le mie scelte editoriali avvengono per una buona percentuale dal catalogo dell'*École des loisirs*, che è una casa editrice che da più di 40 anni lavora con gli albi illustrati e ha una grandissima esperienza anche nei confronti del mercato. D'altro canto però devo sempre fare le dovute distinzioni: loro si muovono in un mercato molto vivace, in cui le istituzioni investono sulla promozione alla lettura quindi sulle biblioteche, le scuole, ecc. mentre noi....' ("Donne dell'editoria" n. pag.)

1963. As well as *Piccolo blu e piccolo giallo*, this is another case of an imported work violating dominant norms in the target context. Sendak's book rejects the idea of a literature for children that fulfils a reassuring and protective function. It does not shy away from taboo subjects such as a vivid description of children's innermost fears, through the illustrations of monstrous creatures. It took a while for the book to be accepted and welcomed by critics in Italy; many could not understand the audacity of Archinto's initiatives, and criticised them because they were too far from coeval books for children (Archinto 267-8). As seen, that gap started to be filled, not exclusively by translations, but also by a few original writers who perceived the conservatism of Italian literature for children, compared to foreign works.

Bianca Pitzorno (1942-) is a writer whose literary repertoire indirectly owes a great deal to foreign literature, both for children and for adults. It is also through this 'interference' that she has been able to stimulate indigenous children's literature and offer a new approach in terms of new themes and styles. Her first novel for children was *Sette Robinson su un'isola matta* (inspired by *Swiss Family Robinson*), which was published in 1973. Pitzorno herself traces back the precursors of the adventure genre and reveals how much she drew on them to write her own work:

Questo mio primo romanzo si potrebbe definire come una sorta di 'meta-letteratura', in quanto ho messo in scena dei personaggi che, avendo letto molti romanzi d'avventura e di naufraghi, credono di sapere come comportarsi all'occorrenza... È stato il primo libro che ho 'composto', mettendo insieme tutti i libri letti da bambina. In certo qual modo non ho mai smesso di fare questo, perché tutti i miei libri, che adesso sono quarantaquattro, in ogni pagina portano le tracce di ciò che ho letto nella mia infanzia e adolescenza....Decisi di scrivere un libro di avventure e di naufraghi ed a quel punto mi tornarono in mente, sulle mani, sulle punte delle dita, tutti i libri avventurosi che avevo tanto amato. La prima grande avventura di naufraghi che io ho amato alla follia è stato *L'isola misteriosa* di Verne e poi *Robinson Crusoe*...("Radici" 147)

Pitzorno is one of the best known writers of children's literature in Italy. Her work challenges the conventions and stereotypes of the prevalent Italian literary tradition. Foreign literature, from which she has always derived creative inspiration and ideas, has pervaded Pitzorno's literary imagination. This influence dates back to her childhood, during which she read

...tutti i classici per ragazzi, da *Piccole donne* ai *Ragazzi della via Pal* a *Senza famiglia* a *Incompreso*...Mi piacevano i pellerossa e idolatravo i personaggi di Fenimore Cooper...*Marigold* di Lucy M. Montgomery...di quell'autrice, la Hodgson Burnett, ci piaceva di più *Il giardino segreto* (*Storia* 101-2).

In her writing, traces of those foreign authors both of adult and children's literature are evident. *La bambinaia francese* (2004), for example, is directly inspired by Brontë's *Jane Eyre*.¹¹⁹

Pitzorno's literature also pays great attention to girls: it is not by chance that most of the fictional characters of her books are girls. Pippi Långstrump, Jane Eyre, Maggie Tulliver from *The Mill on the Floss*, Dorothy Gale from *The Wizard of Oz* (1900), Jo March from *Little Women*, Mary Lennox from *The Secret Garden* (1911), Marigold from *Magic Marigold*, and Anne from *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) are the literary heroines that inspired her (*Storia* 163). In particular, the character of Bibi greatly inspired Pitzorno as a child:

Bibi era una ragazzina proprio come avrei voluto essere io. Libera, avventurosa, sincera. Sapeva disegnare...arrampicarsi sui muri più lisci aiutandosi con le unghie delle mani e dei piedi, andava in giro in bicicletta, senza grandi, per tutta la Danimarca e aveva un gruppetto di amiche fedelissime. Era completamente diversa dalle fanciulline lacrimose di tantissimi romanzi 'per giovinette'. Era intelligente, spiritosa, democratica, e quando assisteva ad un'ingiustizia si arrabbiava come me. (*Storia* 102-3)

When Pitzorno, as a child herself, reached the reading age, original Italian literature for children had no female models

¹¹⁹ '...ho impiegato più di trent'anni a prepararlo, da quando, all'età di tredici-quattordici anni, ho letto Jane Eyre e ho avuto subito la sgradevole sensazione che Adèle non veniva trattata come sarebbe dovuta essere trattata' (Pitzorno, "Radici" 148).

as such. In fact, the most authoritative models for women were still those produced and promoted by Fascism and by the Church. In the 1960s, *Betty*, an Italian series appealing to young girls, supported bourgeois models of female education (Boero and De Luca 252-3). Apart from exceptions such as Ziliotto's series, only from 1988 onwards did the representation of women change substantially, thanks to the series *Gaia Junior*¹²⁰ edited by Francesca Lazzarato for the publishing house Mondadori: 'Eroine con personalità ben definite, con desideri, paure e aspirazioni di vario genere, tutte però consapevoli che il fatto di essere una ragazzina e non un maschio pone problemi e difficoltà che richiedono, per essere superate, coraggio e cervello' (Pitzorno, *Storia* 164).

In this respect, the major contribution made by Pitzorno in putting forward a new literary model in which girls' characters were presented in a different light becomes clear. In 1975 most publishers refused her book *Extraterrestre alla pari* (1979) for its inclusion of feminist critique in children's literature. The work had to wait four years to be published (*Storia* 166). *Extraterrestre alla pari* is directly inspired by Henry Winterfeld's *Kommt ein Mädchen geflogen*, translated in Italy in 1960 as *Piovuta dal cielo* and published in Ziliotto's series *Martin Pescatore*. Pitzorno, naming her protagonist after Winterfeld's, tells the story of Mo, a being from another planet sent to Earth

¹²⁰ *Gaia Junior* published authors such as Astrid Lindgren, Christine Nöstlinger, Bianca Pitzorno, Penelope Lively, Margaret Mahy and Erich Kästner, among others.

for a period of time as a formative experience. The fact that Mo does not yet have a specific gender causes its new terrestrial family to panic, not knowing how to 'categorise' her/him. At first it seems that Mo is a boy and he is thus sent to a male school and made to attend all the activities commonly recognised as boyish. However, when a blood test reveals that Mo is a girl, she is sent to a girls' school. She is signed on for other pastimes and loses the freedom granted to her as a boy. At the end of the story, she is happily back on her planet, where there are no differences in the treatment of boys and girls. The story of Mo marks a significant stage in the history of Italian children's literature because it breaks up traditional conventions of 'not talking' about the differentiation of roles according to gender. When Mo is found to be a girl, she loses status and freedom and the underlying message of the story becomes a feminist one.

One of the best known and internationally recognised books written by Pitzorno is *L'incredibile storia di Lavinia* (1985), whose example unveils how much the best part of original Italian literature for children of recent years owes to foreign influences. In her autobiography, *Storia delle mie storie*, the writer narrates the genesis of a novel which is representative and significant because it breaks an old taboo of children's literature: namely that of talking about excrement. Pitzorno used to invent stories for a girl, the daughter of friends

of hers, and noticed that she enjoyed stories about urine and faeces best (140-2). According to Pitzorno, most adults reject and disapprove of the fact that children find it normal and rather enjoyable to talk about excrement. They are not, as most adults think, reluctant to talk about a topic that is at the centre of their childhood jokes and funny songs (Pitzorno, *Storia* 144-5). Pitzorno was among the first in Italy to pursue an idea of literature for children as primarily faithful to children as readers, considering that writing for children should not be an exercise in censorship against what children are interested in and want to know about. If Dahl was subversive in his approach to children as adults, Pitzorno goes one step further in her subversion of accepted norms when she deals with subjects traditionally considered taboo or outside the scope of literature for children. In this respect, the metaphor (writing for children as simultaneous interpreting) she uses to describe the art of writing for them is telling:

Si potrebbe dire che l'autore per bambini nel momento stesso in cui scrive opera una specie di traduzione simultanea. Si tratta di vedere se traduce spontaneamente in quella che è stata la sua lingua madre, poi non più praticata perché sostituita da quella del nuovo paese di adulto, ma comunque mai dimenticata. Oppure se traduce meccanicamente aiutandosi con i vocabolari della sua preparazione pedagogica o delle sue "buone intenzioni" in una lingua ormai diventata straniera, cancellata dalla memoria e reimparata artificialmente. (*Storia* 126)

L'incredibile storia di Lavinia (1985) reaches back to a long tradition of foreign stories for children. The narrative is full of reminiscences of other works such as Andersen's *The Little Match-Girl* and *The Lord of the Rings*:

Forse perché era Natale, forse per la presenza di alcuni adulti che non conoscevo bene, invece di inventare qualcosa di nuovo, attaccai con *La piccola fiammiferaia* di Andersen....Semplicemente proseguii introducendo nelle peripezie della fiammiferaia un nuovo elemento: l'anello magico che trasformava tutto in caccia. Non era un'idea molto originale. Avevo riletto da poco *l'Orlando furioso*, nel quale un anello magico, infilato su un dito, rende i personaggi invisibili e permette loro di sfuggire ai nemici. La stessa magia, ma quando l'anello veniva messo in bocca, l'avevo ritrovata nel *Signore degli anelli* di Tolkien. Quanto al potere dello sguardo, il suggerimento mi veniva da Stephen King. Non tanto da *Carrie, lo sguardo di Satana*, che avevo visto solo al cinema, ma da quel bellissimo romanzo che è *L'incendiaria*, dove la protagonista è una bambina piccola ingiustamente perseguitata dagli adulti, proprio come la fiammiferaia di Andersen. (Pitzorno, *Storia* 143)

Interference, therefore, can take the form of subversion of tradition, as in the examples described above, resulting in the blurring of gender differences, the 'upgrading' of children as thinking creatures, and the introduction of elements, like excrement, formerly considered out of bounds. All these changes, produced in part by interference, may have opened

the door to the profound changes that literature for children in Italy went through during the last part of the century.

2. The Impact of Globalisation on Children's Literature in Italy

From the end of the 1980s onwards, Italian children's literature has gone through a process of further modernisation; many changes have affected it not only as a literary genre but especially as a publishing sector. New narrative models and a greater variety of genres have enriched the repertoire of the system, while the number of publishing houses specialising in children's literature has increased and a more consumer-oriented marketing strategy has been adopted. In this respect, by the end of the 1990s, Italian children's literature narrowed the gap with more developed foreign literatures. This new scenario has considerably affected not only indigenous literature but also the importation of translations and thus the relationship and interaction between the two, generating new dynamics.

The phenomenon described above can also be read in terms of norms. Until the 1980s, business norms, though already strong, were counterbalanced in Italy by equally strong didactic and moral constraints. Since then, the former have taken control of the biggest part of children's literature, regulating its production and international exchange. Isabelle

Desmidt defines 'business norms' as those that determine the form of the translation as a commercial product (168). Italian literature for children has become a prolific publishing sector, bringing business norms to occupy a very high (if not the highest) position in the hierarchy of the large number of norms that influence children's books. Business norms are constantly subject to change and the speed of this change is determined by the laws of marketing. If, as Toury suggests, we imagine norms as 'regularities' and we place them on an axis (54) whose extremes are 'idiosyncrasies' and 'rules' (or in Chesterman's terms 'conventions' and 'laws' 55), business norms in children's literature at this particular historical time should be found closer to the extreme that is 'rules'.

These changes are also observable when looking at what has changed in the organisation and distribution of publishing houses in Italy. Despite the increasing number of publishers, a few big publishers have gained control of most of the market: twelve publishers control over 50% of the production of new books for children in Italy (Mondadori, Emme, Fabbri, Giunti, Piemme are the first five) (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, "Rapporto 2007" 44). Big publishers can compete in a more globalised economic context, having the resources for acquiring and marketing foreign books while at the same time promoting indigenous literature. In addition, products are currently distributed through new channels such as Internet bookstores

and large retailers. If on the one hand this has facilitated the meeting between the book and the young reader, on the other, it has cast off the role of bookshops specialising in children's literature (Davite 62-3). This situation is the result of a worldwide distribution process. Immediately after the Second World War, as Daniel Hade explains referring more specifically to the Anglo-American market, the trade of children's literature was in the hands of small 'family owned, modest-sized businesses' ("Publishers"). These firms, although undoubtedly interested in economic results, were, to a great extent, still influenced by didactic norms. Since the 1980s, the publishing sector of children's books has been absorbed by large houses bringing about a more profit-oriented system (Hade, "Publishers").

If we look more specifically at translations imported into the Italian market in this new framework, it can be noted that their number has considerably increased, reaching and often surpassing the production of national literature, and that this has considerably affected indigenous literature. Before the 1980s, for example, the norms of the target context would still exert a great influence on the way in which foreign books were imported in Italy. As observed, translations were often made to submit to the norms of the target literature and culture through interventions of adaptation and affiliation to target models. Since the 1980s, it seems that most translations and

indigenous works are influenced by the same forces and norms, with the result that translations coming from more powerful literatures for children drive the publishing sector of Italian literature and notably influence its original production. Data referring to the production of children's books in Italy from 1990 onwards show that, compared to the previous decades, the number of books imported from abroad has begun to exceed that of indigenous literature. From 1990 to 1997 the percentage of books imported from other countries swung between a minimum of 46.41% to 50.67%. From 1998 to 2008, with the only exception of the years 2003 (49.61%) and 2005 (47.26%), the percentage of translations was over 50%, with a peak of 55% in 1998. The largest share of translations comes from the UK, followed by the US, France, and Germany (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, "Produzione 1987-2008").

Different levels of the sector of children's (publishers, scholars, writers, translators, etc.) have discordant views about the effects that the increased number of translations has produced on the target system: while some look positively at the opening of the Italian system of children's literature to a more globalised way of receiving and exporting books for children, others focus more on what they perceive as an obstacle to a qualitative development of national literature. According to several publishers, the reasons why preference is given to foreign books rather than to indigenous are due both to

the need for a wider market, offering interesting alternatives, and to the high level of professionalism found abroad (Seveso 40-1). In 2008, 51.36% of new editions consisted of imports, with 24.23% from the UK and 8.76 from the US (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, "Produzione 1987-2008"). When asked to explain why most of the books translated in Italy come from the British and US markets, publishers claimed that those countries offer a wide variety of authors and genres thanks to a more powerful tradition in children's literature: 'É un grande mercato, ha un numero enorme di autori, l'offerta è eccellente e il livello di professionalità di chi scrive è altissimo, sia per i prodotti d'élite che per quelli di largo consumo' (Seveso 40). Fiammetta Giorgi, of Mondadori Ragazzi, states that the choice of books to be published does not depend only on commercial considerations, but also on the literary value of those works (qtd. in Merani 48-9). However, as Beatrice Masini, herself a translator and author of children's books, observes, the value of a book for children does not necessarily guarantee its commercial success (Merani 48-9). Another well known translator, Angela Ragusa, recognises 'the best-seller hunt fever' as a growing phenomenon that leads publishers to frenetically market books belonging to the same genre (48-9). Paola Parazzoli, of Fabbri, points out that Anglophone publishers are able to amortise production costs thanks to a wide market, while countries like Italy, aware of their low selling

potential, have to rely on translations more than on original output for economic success (qtd. in Merani 48-9). Many concurred in expressing their 'deep sadness' for having to draw on foreign books because of the absence of local production (Seveso 40-1). Francesca Lazzarato, editor, writer and translator of children's literature, for example, while on one hand ascribing positive effects to a wider market, thinks that Italian children's literature does not appear ready to control this commercial expansion; educational bodies have been unable to keep pace with these new mechanisms of production and distribution. She also adds that although the influence of a global economy has not reached the levels of the American publishing industry yet, Italian literature for children, which is weaker and more vulnerable, has reacted to these changes by becoming strongly dependent on it and risks being reduced to a mere commercial enterprise (Lazzarato 11-3). What creates anxiety seems to be the inability of the Italian market to absorb increasing selection, resulting in the overabundance of new books not backed up by an equivalent number of readers.

Some international academics also express their fears with respect to recent globalising phenomena. Jack Zipes, for instance, argues that the positive role that the market should play as a means of spreading literature has turned out to be an obstacle to quality literature for children, since it is led by 'prevailing consumerism and commercialism':

More important for understanding what we arbitrarily call children's literature is the institution of children's literature, which, I claim, paradoxically undermines the quality products for children, that is, "the great fiction", poetry and artwork that it purportedly wants to disseminate and use to socialize and develop future humanist thinkers. This is because the institution of children's literature must operate more and more within the confines of the culture industry in which the prevailing consumerism and commercialism continue to minimize and marginalize the value of critical and creative thinking, and with it, the worth of an individual human being. (40-1)

The main worries come from what is perceived as a mere 'commercialisation' of this literature. According to Hade a general change in the way children's books are marketed has occurred: 'Modern publishers understand that they are not in the book business; rather they sell ideas they call "brands", and they market their brands through "synergized" goods designed to infiltrate as many aspects of a child's life as possible' (Hade, "Curious George" 159).

The quality of books for children represents another concern for many Italian scholars in the field. Denti (268) and Blezza (297) among others think that an increase in the offer has not been met with the same increase in quality or in the percentage of new readers. Market laws, Blezza states, do not care about the quality of the books; the rapid times for production, the flattening of taste (297-8) and the serialisation

of best-sellers are stratagems employed to exploit a successful trend (302). Others think that these trends, as a result, hinder the refinement of a product, which becomes of poorer quality. The lowering of standards is then seen as one of the predictable consequences of the increase in the production of goods and of the numerical disparity between small publishers, still aiming at publishing innovative good products, and big corporations, more interested in replicating the success of bestsellers (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, “In equilibrio critico” 23-4). Especially with regards to fiction, traditional series seem to have been overtaken by

...un'*editoria di evento*, che punta al bestseller e al libro “fuori dai ranghi”, meglio se *cross-over* e connotato da elementi di serialità capaci di mettere in campo nuovi fattori di attrazione e fidelizzazione dei lettori, ma spesso più legati ai personaggi e/o agli aspetti del layout – come succede in alcune saghe fantasy o nelle serie alla “Stilton” – che non a connotati culturali come fattori fondanti dell'identità delle collane. (Bartolini e Pontegobbi, “In equilibrio critico” 21)

These views about the future development of literature for children in general and of the Italian production in particular certainly give voice to some justified doubts. However, a greater opening of the Italian system to the influence of foreign literature cannot only be seen as a form of negative interference and examining some of the mechanisms through

which translated books enter a system can support this argument. The structure of the system of children's literature, whose centre had been represented and directed by educational and traditional pedagogical frameworks for a long time, seems to have changed, little by little, its own internal organisation, with new rules dominating it both through 'perpetuation' and 'change':

Since the system is dominated by its center, and the latter's main interest is to maintain itself over time, change will be introduced or allowed into the center to the extent that it can provide such domination. Thus, whenever domination is available by perpetuation (i.e., by non-change), the extent of change will be minimal to nil. On the other hand, whenever non-change would mean loss of domination, change will become the leading principle for the system. In either case, it is the general norms of the culture that make change desirable or undesirable. Therefore, change factors in any particular activity cannot be dealt with as separated from change factors in culture ('society') in general. (Even-Zohar 89)

As noted above, changes in culture, and more specifically in the publishing sector of children's literature, in the market and in the way of distributing these books, have been tangible. Best sellers, for instance, when successfully introduced into the target system, produce a change in the centre of the system or at least temporarily revitalise it. A phase of perpetuation follows through the replication of the model represented by that book,

in the attempt to benefit from the positive wave created by it. The best seller can either introduce a new model or, as, for instance, in the case of the *Harry Potter* books, give new lifeblood to an already known one, namely the fantasy genre. This phenomenon lasts until the model gathers consensus, while in the meantime the market looks for another model.

If we look more specifically at translations, as Even-Zohar explains, when a model imported through translation is able to reach the centre of the literary system, it is likely to stimulate the indigenous production of the same model. In many cases this model had already been present in the system, but was kept in a peripheral position or not recognised at all (70). In this case, as in that referred to in the first part of this chapter, we can talk about a positive process of interference, this time made possible by new channels of distribution and communication between different literatures. This also brings us back to Philippe Codde's model¹²¹ and its application to the category of children's best sellers.

According to Codde, the fact that a text is central ('the term *central* would refer to those texts and models that, at a certain point in time, influence the production of new texts' 104) does not necessarily imply that the same text is canonised ('the term *canonized* [is used] for those items—texts and models—that enjoy or enjoyed cultural prestige' 104). Thus, *Harry Potter*,

¹²¹ See Chapter Two.

while able to stimulate production of or renew attention on a specific genre of children's books, so far has not been acknowledged in terms of literary merit by those institutions that determine the canonisation of books. According to data collected from forty-two bookshops spread across the Italian territory and referring to 1999, the first two translations of the *Harry Potter* saga (*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997) and *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1999), published in Italy in 1998 and 1999 as *Harry Potter e la pietra filosofale* and *Harry Potter e la camera dei segreti*, respectively) were best sellers in Italy. Another survey was commissioned by the Italian magazine *Liber* in the same year: thirty-five experts in children's literature, well-known university scholars, authors of children's books, librarians, school teachers and journalists were asked to indicate the best books published in 1999. *Harry Potter* does not appear among the seventy-nine titles mentioned ("Sondaggi del 2000").

The entrance of J.K. Rowling's works into the Italian children's literary system has certainly given a boost to the fantasy genre: an increase has been registered in the publication of fantasy works from 2001 (26 new titles) to 2005 (61 new titles) (Bartolini and Pontegobbi, "Rapporto 2006" 35). Thus, in terms of a positive stimulation of the same genre in Italy, *Harry Potter* can be seen as the example of effective interference. For instance, Silvana De Mari, Italian writer of

fiction for young readers, had to wait many years before seeing her first fantasy story, *L'ultimo elfo*, published in 2001. She now enjoys renown, and her Italian publisher is the same as *Harry Potter's*. Her works have been translated in twelve different languages. The English translation of *L'ultimo elfo* (*The Last Elf*) was published in 2007 by the English publisher of *Harry Potter*. One question is then to what extent De Mari's success is owed to 'Harry Potter mania' and to a recent revitalisation of works such as *The Lord of the Rings* through their different translations and transmission through other media. Her works are now appreciated abroad as much as in Italy. This might be considered as a successful process of interference and seen as something that makes a book coming from a minor national literature able to cross its borders and become known abroad.

The translation of J.K. Rowling's series in Italy seems to illustrate what has been discussed earlier in this chapter. The *Harry Potter* saga is a work that has been marketed and distributed according to the changes that occurred in Italian children's literature in preceding decades, and it shows how the target literature and culture have reacted to these importations. The great success of the series has sparked off a general debate not only on the series itself but also on literature for children in general. In addition, the worldwide distribution of the book has also directed attention to the issue of translating literature for children as never before.

As stated earlier, most of the best-sellers of children's literature in Italy come from foreign literatures, especially from the United States and the UK. It is noticeable that the reception of *Harry Potter* in translation, in particular in Italy but also in the other countries where it has been translated, has stimulated at least some interest in the act of translation itself. The Italian *Premio Andersen* every year awards prizes to authors of books for children, illustrators, editors, etc. for their work. According to the list of award-winners from 2001 up to now, only two translators have received the prize: Beatrice Masini and Giorgia Grilli, both for their translations of different volumes of the young wizard's saga. Beatrice Masini is a well-known writer for children and young adults, and the translator of *Harry Potter e il prigioniero di Azkaban* (2000) and *Harry Potter e il calice di fuoco* (2001). In an interview released to the online translation journal *N.d.T. La Nota del Traduttore*, Masini says that she has been directly involved in the success of the books she translated. Given that as a common practice, translators are never fully appreciated, at times not even mentioned on book covers, Masini thinks that the attention given to her by the media is due to the fact that her opinions on the subject are welcome because she is not only a translator, but also a competent editor and famous writer of children's books. Thus, her contributions allow the media to keep talking about the most controversially exciting phenomenon in children's

literature of the past few years (qtd. in Agrosi). The focus of most of the articles about the translation of *Harry Potter* is on linguistic aspects such as, for instance, the rendering of personal names into Italian. On the other hand, less attention has been paid to the way in which the *Harry Potter* books have been translated as a whole.¹²²

The effects of the propagation of the *Harry Potter* saga into many different sectors of global society have been manifold and complex, and reactions have been equally heterogeneous in the Italian context. The first of the *Harry Potter* books had been signalled to the Italian editor Salani by the English publishing house Bloomsbury in May 1997, one month before its launch in the UK market. Salani bought the copyright and the Italian translation of the work was published in May 1998 (Daniele). In December 1998 J. K. Rowling won the 20th edition of *Premio Cento* (one of the most important Italian prizes for international children's literature), the second volume of her saga made its market appearance, the American edition of the first episode was issued, and a rapid and sustained rise to fame was triggered. Due to its exceptional success, the case of *Harry Potter* unveils the multiple constraints and pressures imposed on literature for children by many different agents working within the 'institution of

¹²² The website of Salani, the Italian publishing house for *Harry Potter*, presents a brief *Nota alla traduzione italiana* where some of the strategies used to translate toponyms and characters' names are explained (Daniele).

children's literature'. The 'institution of children's literature', a concept introduced by Jack Zipes referring to American literature for children, is made of three main components, namely 'production', 'distribution', and 'reception', and changes according to different epochs and national contexts. Zipes claims that each work is not created and released in a vacuum, but it

...is embedded within a vast institution of children's literature that may undercut or reinforce the author's intentions. His role in the work is largely finished when it leaves his hand. The distributor and the market will determine the reception of the book within the institution of children's literature. In fact, the institution of children's literature can heighten, embellish, diminish, or destroy the existence of the person who writes a book for children. (45)

When in 2001 many were publicly professing great enthusiasm at the increase in figures concerning children's reading habits and a revival of the fantasy genre, the well-known scholar Antonio Faeti defined *Harry Potter* as a 'global' yet ephemeral success which was mostly due to the commercial influence of the sponsors, but had nothing to do with the real fantasy genre ("Per resistere"). Criticism against *Harry Potter* also relates to the cross-over quality of the book: that it is also read by adults. The effects of the impact of translations have to be discerned not only in the literary

system, but also in a wider socio-cultural context: *Harry Potter* has not only had major effects on children's literature, but it has also been able to cross boundaries between systems and polysystems. J. K. Rowling's works represent a case of 'crossover writing'.¹²³ Many children's books are appreciated also by adults, entering their literature system. Rachel Falconer, who has explored this phenomenon, claims that '...Rowling's success with adult readers is only one example of the way new and classic children's fiction shifted into the literary mainstream' (1-2). Works by Phillip Pullman, Eoin Colfer or Mark Haddon did the same, and this tendency seems to keep growing. One of the reasons, she claims, may be attributable to the multiplication of channels through which children's literature circulates. This has made children's literary culture more available to a wider audience, including adults. For example, movies based on best-sellers for children represent the most exploited and successful medium of distribution (Falconer 2).

In this respect, in Italy, especially in academia, different opinions have been expressed: if on the one hand the fact that a book specifically written for children ends up being appreciated by adults has been seen by many as a positive sign, meaning that children's literature has come of age and has abandoned its preponderant didactic approach, on the

¹²³ See Chapter Two.

other, if the book is built from the beginning to meet as wide an audience as possible, the quality may be negatively affected by homogenisation (Blezza 303). A closer observation of the Italian context may thus help us understand this kind of resistance against new approaches in the production and reading of literature for children. In the last decade, concerns with regards to children's reading habits have intensified in Italy. In the first chapter of this thesis, the issue of the prevalently pedagogical research approach to children's literature in Italy was extensively addressed. Concern stems from what is seen as a dangerous 'flattening of ideas' which scholars see as leading to the loss of one of the main primary function of books, which is to stimulating thinking (Blezza 9-10).

More generally, it can be said that the reception of a best-seller such as *Harry Potter* could not but exert an impact on different sectors of society. Its success has clearly split the audience, and the presence of two main schools of thought has emerged: on one side there are those who see J.K. Rowling's works as a commercial trap, lacking any literary merit, and on the other there are those who appreciate them at least because they have brought children and young people back to reading. The former opinion is clearly expressed outside Italy in the words of Harold Bloom:

And yet I feel a discomfort with the Harry Potter mania and I hope that my discontent is not merely a highbrow snobbery, or a nostalgia for a

more literate fantasy to beguile (shall we say) intelligent children of all ages. Can more than 35 million book buyers, and their offspring, be wrong? Yes, they have been, and will continue to be for as long as they persevere with Potter. ("Can 35 Million Book Buyers Be Wrong?")

Zipes also expressed his scepticism about *Harry Potter's* assumed power to encourage children to read: 'book publishers argue that as long as these books get children to read, this is good in itself. In other words, the habit of reading (one habit among others, like watching TV or going to malls) is a virtue in itself (7)'. Many child psychologists, on the other hand, are pleased with the positive message they claim the story of the wizard transmits, especially if regarded as a modern *bildungsroman* (Motta 25-8) able to help children to cope with the fears associated with growing up (Ricci 13).

One of the positive consequences of the exposure of the Italian market to a more international context can be seen in a greater chance to export its original products abroad. However, the imbalance between exported and imported products is still wide and, apart from some notable exceptions, there is no bilateral exchange between Italy as a producer of children's literature and the UK and US as those countries that export most into it. According to Motoko Rich, the United States are resistant towards importing other literatures because of the

linguistic ignorance of American editors, who are thus reluctant to approach other productions:

Although there are exceptions among the big publishing houses, the editors from the United States are generally more likely to bid on other hyped American or British titles than to look for new literature in the international halls....Some of the larger American publishers said monolingual editors fear making risky buying decisions based on short translated excerpts.... 'American publishers are depriving the American readership of the cultural diversity through translation to which they are entitled,' Ms. Noble said. 'It is what I call the poverty of the rich'.

This phenomenon has more to do with the strength of the publishing sector than with a linguistic issue. The reason why a country like Italy imports the majority of its books is certainly not a result of its linguistic incompetence. This is definitely an issue of both cultural and economic power. British children's literature, for instance, has produced most of the titles now considered as classics for children. Nordic countries have a strong children's literature tradition. However, the lack of corresponding economic power prevented them from reaching the same sales figures as the UK or the US.

In the UK, only approximately 1% of children's books consist of translations (Hallford and Zaghini 4). According to Phillip Pullman, this is due firstly to the weight and predominance of the English language (6). Another reason can

be found in globalisation 'that's driven by money and business, not by culture and curiosity' (Pullman 7). Moreover,

...it costs money to translate books, because it's a demanding intellectual activity and there aren't many people who can do it well, and publishers are reluctant to spend money on producing books that booksellers won't sell, and booksellers are reluctant to give space to books that readers don't want, and readers don't want books they've never seen reviewed, and literary editors won't review books if the publishers don't spend much money on advertising, and publishers won't spend money on advertising because...And it all goes around in a circle, and outside the circle is the rest of the world. (Pullman 7)

Nicholas Tucker adds that, because of its own strength, British literature for children has never been well disposed to the effort of looking beyond its boundaries (10). By contrast, Italian literature for children is relatively young and weak compared to the Anglophone tradition. Publishing data have shown that there is an imbalanced relationship between Italian and Anglo-American children's literature, only the latter playing the role of source literature for the former. This seems to fit Even-Zohar's views, according to which: 'There is no symmetry in literary interference. A target literature is, more often than not, interfered with by a source literature which completely ignores it' (Even-Zohar 62).

It is also remarkable that only a small number of books are translated into Italian from countries like France and Spain,

whose geographical and linguistic closeness to Italy might suggest the possibility of a greater dynamic literary exchange. According to the representative for the Mondadori publishing house, French children's literature tends to be too localised: 'It is easier to translate an Australian book about school than a French one' (Seveso 41). The common tendency in telling stories and writing about themes restricted to a specific national reality constitutes, according to Alice Fornasetti from the publishing house Edizioni Piemme, precisely one of the main reasons preventing Italian children's literature from being sold abroad. She adds that Italian books for children that enter the international market are mostly those whose characters and settings are invented and have no explicit link with an Italian cultural background (qtd. in Merani 48).

In some respects, this seems to be confirmed by the two most well-known examples of Italian books for children that recently gained fame outside national borders. The first case is offered by *Ulysses Moore*, a series written by the Italian author Pierdomenico Baccalario from 2004. This series has been translated into English and published in the United States by Scholastic, the US publishing house for children's books and education support that also publishes *Harry Potter*. Does this book, compared to other Italian books, possess specific characteristics that make it able to cross the national borders? The suitability of the book for transfer to the Anglo-American

culture is evident: the story is set in Cornwall, where the characters have to solve historical mysteries, and the intertextual elements refer to the most well-known classics of the fantasy genre. In this respect, the observation of paratextual elements seems also useful to understand how the series appeals to different national markets: those elements do not stress the fact that *Ulysses Moore* is an Italian book. Neither the source text nor the American edition displays the name of the author on the cover, and the website of Piemme publishing house indicates 'Ulysses Moore' as the name of the author, and Pierdomenico Baccalario as its translator. When interviewed, the author claims that he translated some manuscripts written by a mysterious man, Ulysses Moore ("Continua la saga"). Pretending that he found the source texts somewhere in Cornwall is a device (pseudo-translation) undoubtedly adopted in order to excite the curiosity of young readers. It also serves as a useful commercial trick. As has been noted, the setting and the intertextual elements of the series refer to the atmosphere of the fantasy genre which does not have a long tradition in Italy. The names of the characters, for example, are not specifically Italian, but international (Julia Covenant, Rick Banner, Tommaso Ranieri Strambi, Malarius Voynich, among others).

Another example is provided by a further Italian series for children. In recent years, before the surge of the fantasy genre

in children's literature, there has been a considerable increase in detective stories. Classics (such as works by Arthur Conan Doyle or Agatha Christie) have been either retranslated or re-edited for children, and new authors of this genre have met with success. Most of the books of this kind published in Italy are translations. However, among these best sellers, there is also an Italian series: *Geronimo Stilton* by Elisabetta Dami. Its first episode was published in 2000 and so far it has been translated into twenty-four languages (Merani 48). As with *Ulysses Moore* (the publisher is also the same), this huge international success is helped by the fact that the series does not address a specific national audience. A mixture of different narrative and visual elements (the text is illustrated) makes it adaptable to different local realities, while simultaneously reducible to none of them.

In this respect, Michael Cronin's distinction between 'internationalization' which indicates the practice of designing a product in such a way that it can easily be adapted to foreign markets, and 'localization', for which a product is redesigned in order to meet the needs of a special local market (13) seems relevant. If applied to the two examples above, the marketing strategy of internationalisation would lead books for children to be created with a foreign consumer in mind and afterward to undergo a further process of localisation according to the country in which they are imported. The first stage would take

place 'at source' and try to keep a broad spectrum of possible target cultures. The second, which would take place in the target culture through the act of translation, would point to a more specific national culture.

Geronimo Stilton's stories, for instance, are set in imaginary places ('Topazia, Isola dei Topi') and the names of the characters refer either to their physical features or to a specific trait of their personality. In the American translation, the adventures take place in 'New Mouse City (New Mouse Island)' and given that the original proper names of the characters are not greatly localised, in their English translation some are kept closer to the original names and only slightly adapted to the new audience (Geronimo's sister, Tea Stilton, becomes Thea Stilton; Geronimo's cousin, Trappola Stilton, becomes Trap Stilton; Sally Rausmaussen becomes Sally Ratmousen). Other names are changed completely, especially when they recall one of the characteristics of the character (Patty Spring, environmentalist, becomes Petunia Pretty Paws; Zia Lippa, Geronimo's aunt is Aunt Sweetfur). In the US the publishing house which bought the copyright is once again Scholastic Press. The release of the book has been supported by a strong marketing campaign involving schools. Again, paratextual elements can tell us more: the name of the real author is not specified, and, on the cover, 'Geronimo Stilton' appears as the name of both the main character and the author. On the

website dedicated to the series, the Italian origin of the book is not mentioned and the volumes are presented as 'chapter books from international best selling mouse, author, and adventurer Geronimo Stilton' ("Geronimo Stilton").

At this point in time the results of recent interactions between foreign literature for children and the Italian system are difficult to assess in terms of their impact. There is no doubt that under foreign influence, conservative forces in Italy have been put under considerable but healthy pressure, but one wonders whether this pressure is contributing to the creation of some kind of 'globalised' writing without any local distinctive features. At this stage it would be difficult to reach definite conclusions as to the value of these changes as they affect not only children's literature, but literary culture as a whole, and not only in Italy.

Conclusion

Histories of Italian literature for children all agree in presenting the period from the 1950s onwards as a phase in which that literature has developed in many ways. It has evolved in terms of literary achievements; it has gained a position in academia, and it has become an important sector in publishing. What still needs to be pointed out, however, is the role that the influence of translated literature has played in this overall development. In this respect, I used the concept of 'interference' to observe

some of the channels through which this influence has been exerted. While the channels represented by publishing initiatives driven by specific individuals are directly observable, the case of writers who through their own works were able to transfer into Italian literature for children innovative ideas and models derived from foreign literatures is less manifest. The paths that foreign influences can follow in order to permeate target literature describe different ways of interacting between translations and indigenous literature. While the first route, being more immediately recognisable as an act of importation, could also be more easily discarded by those that supported a more conservative tradition of Italian literature, the second is conducted through a less evident operation that allows foreign elements to merge with indigenous components and thus to mould the target context and make it more welcoming to subsequent translations.

The second part of the chapter has tried to point out another kind of 'interference', namely that exerted by a new way of producing and distributing children's books in a global market. This new model has characterised Italian children's literature from the 1980s onwards and has consequently affected the importation of translations, and also exporting Italian products abroad. According to Alice Bell, '[c]onsumer culture is not something we merely invoke when aiming to "explain away" what we hope to dismiss, it is an intrinsic part of

the book writing, producing, buying and reading *business*' (99-100). To ignore it or consider it as a separate phenomenon would result in offering a partial picture of contemporary literature for children.

The case studies described earlier leave more questions open than they answer. We can see more or less accurately that a system like the Italian one, based on tradition and didacticism and mostly unchanged for a long time, experienced violent changes at the beginning of the last century. At that time, a dominant ideology manipulated the genre to introduce concepts that carried the outer shell of moral values and precepts but in reality constructed a vehicle of propaganda. After the War this 'subversion' has continued, with the importation and creation of children's stories that move a long way away from traditional norms, as for instance, the blurring of gender roles, or the choice of taboo subjects, like dying or physiological functions. Didacticism per se was also set aside.

However, all these explorations cannot help predict what will happen with Italian children's literature in the next twenty years. The changes taking place nowadays, in the 'electronic age', make us wonder what great transformations children's literature will undergo next. It would certainly make sense to explore the mechanisms and rules of this new way of producing and distributing literature for children in a globalised market. At present, it is hard to assess the impact of these most recent

changes because some of them are ambiguous in their relationship to the system – some appear to be positive, changing dominant conservative patterns, and some negative, pushing Italian original literature towards some kind of indistinct globalised form. Thus, while it is possible to provisionally identify current trends, looking both at individual cases and at the reactions of people involved in the field, greater distance and a sense of perspective are still needed in order to produce a definitive judgement on recent phenomena.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have shown how the development of Italian children's literature and the changes that have occurred in its history can also be read as the result of the interaction between indigenous literature and imported writing. I have argued this point by discussing different issues regarding translated books for children and their relationship with indigenous works in the Italian context. More specifically, this phenomenon has been established as working in both directions, by examining how the position of Italian children's literature in the target polysystem affects translations, and how translations influenced indigenous production during different specific phases of the development of Italian literature for children. Thus, for example, the reasons behind the lack of interest in the subsystem of translated literature for children in the Italian context were traced back through the history of indigenous children's literature. Italian literary traditions and institutions such as schools have resolutely never officially acknowledged the importance of the role played by books for children in a broader cultural context. In the long run, this has influenced both the current status of Italian children's literature and the position occupied by translations in the Italian literary system.

What the observation of the interaction between translated and indigenous children's literature in the Italian

context from the second half of the nineteenth century until today brought to light is a constant process of negotiation between conservatism and innovation. In between two extremes – a complete rejection of new literary models and ideas coming through translations, and their total acceptance – this negotiation resulted in mediation through which foreign works were allowed to enter the target system, but also in many respects were adapted to coeval models of Italian literature for children. In Chapter One, for example, one of the first translations of *Alice in Wonderland* published at the beginning of the twentieth century illustrated this point: although the originality of the story remained salient in the translation, Carroll's book was in part deprived of its innovative force and affiliated to the more conservative coeval tradition of Italian books for children.

This negotiation between innovation and conservatism was explored further by looking at the agents involved in literature for children and its translation at different levels. Translators, educators, authors, and publishers, among others, as those who attempted to direct and control a process of negotiation, acted according to the forces of different historical, cultural, social and economic circumstances. Examples of female translators of children's literature in the late nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century showed, in Chapter Three, how the mediation between conservatism and

innovation was, in many cases, embodied simultaneously; opposition to the 'new' coexisted with the fertilisation of Italian coeval literature for children with innovative material. Attention to translations allows us to expose these aspects of the field; particularly when the distance between the source text and the target text is wide, the choices made by the translator during the act of translation are more evident. Camilla Del Soldato's translations of Lear's nonsense verse from 1908 offer an interesting example of this tension. The fact that nonsense poetry was unfamiliar to Italian literature for children placed the translator between a new and ground-breaking genre and the more traditional Italian model of poetry for children. Del Soldato opted for a work that, although new to Italian children's literature and introducing a new author in Edward Lear, was domesticated and made unrecognisable as a foreign work.

The works and lives of these women offered not only the chance to explore the relationship between female intellectuals (educators, authors, and translators) and children's literature, but also the possibility to widen the scope of the project by relating children's literature and translation to the broader context of women's writing at that time. Women as a group benefited from children's literature at different levels; in the Italian context of the second half of the nineteenth century, it gave them the chance to take part in public cultural life. Some women could dedicate themselves to writing thanks to the

existence of the genre. However, due to the inferior position occupied by children's literature in a broader cultural context, their activities were simultaneously a source of both self-reward and further frustration. This gender-defined reading certainly influences further aspects of the thesis. Other chapters also offer examples of women who, as writers, translators, editors, publishers, reviewers, fictional characters or implied readers, have played a major role in this literature. Women's writing, children's literature, and translation seem to share elements of inferiorisation within Italian literary systems.

Furthermore, careful analysis of historical circumstances and actors enables the contextualisation of translations and their production, which, together with the observation of mechanisms involved in the process of translations (intended as the transfer of books for children from one system into another), represents an effective research tool in order to explore national literatures more in depth. In other words, the application of a broader concept of translation, which includes different forms of rewriting, was found to work effectively in order to better understand aspects of the target literature. In Chapter Two, the analysis of the transformations that classics for children, both Italian and translated, have undergone in time served to show how Italian literature itself has evolved, assuming new forms. By following *Pinocchio* in its journey back and forth from its country of origin, the position that this book at

present occupies as a classic offered a more multifaceted picture of the system of children's literature in Italy. In terms of the interaction between translations and indigenous literature, this analysis showed how some translations of Collodi's work (Disney's adaptation in particular) were able, with time, to influence the reception of this book even within its source culture.

Widening the concept of translation also opened up different types of translation/rewriting, such as intralingual and intersemiotic translations of some classics for children, and led to observe the dynamics taking place among sub-systems that are part of the same cultural system. Thus, for example, the transfer of classics for children from the system of children's literature to that of adult literature, looked at as a proper process of translation, uncovered some mechanisms behind the evolution of classics for children in the same literary system. The example of a modern version of De Amicis' *Cuore* revealed the strategies employed by the rewriters in order to effect this transfer: to the different system of adult culture, to the different medium of radio, and to the present. This investigation led to the conclusion that the evolution of classics, especially when they are internationally recognised as in the case of *Pinocchio*, is the result of the interplay between influences coming from within the source cultural system and external ones. This analysis also confirmed that children's

classics, seen as 'universal' and 'eternal', are, on the contrary, books that more than others evolve and take new forms according to the changes that occur in children's literature and culture.

The changes that occur in books for children, both translated and indigenous, through translation processes also depend on systemic constraints. The issue of rewriting was explored further throughout the thesis by applying the concept of translational norms. Norms helped to establish which systemic constraints have directed the interaction between translations and indigenous literature. Attention to the transfer of books for children from one system to another, and to the way in which these books are received in the target culture by the people or institutions that create or influence norms, exposes the norms of the target literature more clearly, making their identification easier. As a result, it was observed how, in different periods, different norms prevailed over others. During the first phase of the development of Italian literature for children, for example, educational and moral norms were the most influential in affecting the reception of translations. In subsequent phases, other types of norms, such as ideological and commercial ones, became stronger.

The concept of norms was applied more extensively to the context of Fascism. The choice of this historical period seemed particularly suitable for different reasons. Firstly, the

investigation of the historical context of Fascism raised a crucial point about the importance of children's literature in culture: though very often considered as an inferior literary subgenre, this literature has played a major role in the history of Italian culture. It is worth noting that the Fascist regime looked at children's books as powerful vehicles of propaganda and indoctrination. Through them, the dictatorship thought it would be easier to reach not only children, but also the people around them, both at school and at home, in order to instil Fascist ideology. Secondly, in the context of Fascism, the issue of negotiation between conservatism and innovation observed throughout the thesis acquired different ideological connotations. The application of the theory of norms was particularly effective where the norms promoted by Fascism clashed with those imported through translated books for children, and with those supported by some of the regime's influential allies (publishers and the Church, among others).

The extra-textual contributions of the agents of negotiation (translators, literary critics, reviewers and publishers, among others) and to actual translations for children (the *Bibi* series), not only revealed the degree of resistance or openness to new norms entering the target system through translations, but also brought to light a similar kind of ambivalence (noted already in this thesis) with regards to the attitude towards translations of children's books. On an extra-textual level, the regime was

willing to impose its own norms, to produce a change in children's culture and life. However, this did not actually coincide with what the regime eventually did. As already observed in the case of women translators, here the example of *Bibi* showed how the regime had to allow for external constraints to its objectives, and could not simply reject or ban foreign literature. While in the case of women translators constraints were mainly represented by social norms, in the latter case it was mainly business and ideological norms that played a large role.

The case of children's literature during Fascism also served to suggest that one of the first steps towards a better understanding of children's literature and its translation should be the recognition that this literature plays roles in different systems, and that its perception and treatment varies accordingly. Children's literature has acted at different levels in culture and society and thus the interaction between translations and indigenous literature has always been affected by many circumstances, not only restricted to literary discourse, but including many other variables, such as historical, cultural and economic influences.

In order to offer a more comprehensive picture of the status of children's literature in Italy today, in Chapter Five I looked at the new economic organisation of the globe and at the changes that took place in production, importation and

exportation of children's books in Italy during the last few decades. The continuous process of negotiation between innovation and conservatism has taken new forms due to changes occurred in a wider context, and translation offers a privileged point of view on this issue because it exposes aspects of the system that would be more difficult to detect otherwise.

The extreme degree of propagandistic opposition to translations that was reached in Italy under Fascism was replaced, immediately after in the post-war period, with a new openness. This openness initially came from agents within the target context, such as innovative publishers eager to import new material and original writers who were sensitive to external input and to the new world order. The resistance to interference from different literary models and ideas, distant to coeval indigenous literature, was still strong, but new influences found a way in. At the end of the 1980s, however, substantial changes to the organisation of the production and distribution of children's books caused the Italian market to become more globalised, both in terms of importations and exportations. Those changes produced negative reactions in some sectors, such as the educational and academic establishment, which claimed that the modifications in question were 'coerced' by the aggressiveness of business interests. Yet, the examples of Italian series such as *Ulysses Moore* and *Geronimo Stilton*

showed how their success abroad would probably not be possible, at least not in the same terms, if those circumstances had not stimulated some strata of the system previously kept at its periphery. This openness to a more international context enables today's Italian children's literature to cross its national borders, with works that are now translated and read in other countries. Thus Italian children's literature, more than one century after *Pinocchio*, spread once again beyond Italian confines. Can *Geronimo Stilton* be seen as the modern *Pinocchio*? Is it at least the modern evolution of classics for children? Or, as many suggest, is this only the beginning of a new era in children's literature, in which national literatures will make room for a global literature for children?

The conclusions drawn from this thesis give rise to further unresolved questions that would benefit from future research. Genuine concern about the low status of the children's literature genre within the Italian cultural system is offset by an eagerness to take children's literature out of its secondary position. Yet, current research, approaches, and proposed solutions, lack a sufficiently global perspective, which would allow us to look at translations and indigenous literature from different angles. In the past few decades, the growth of critical research on literature for children has revealed the need to explore the interfaces it shares with adjacent research areas. The results have been fruitful in fostering an interdisciplinary

treatment of research on children's literature. Yet, in Italy, many of those interfaces remain virtually unexplored.

A more developed awareness of research on children's literature in translation is needed in the specific national context of Italy. By casting light on segments of the target context so far neglected or only partially researched, more of the system can be made visible. Thus, not only the problems directly linked to translations and their impact on indigenous literature, but also aspects of society (the role of women, ideology, and globalisation, among others) apparently detached from discourses on translation, can be explored.

To conclude, this project has furthered the understanding of the process of cross-cultural exchange that takes place when children's literature is translated and transferred from one system into another, and such investigation has shown how the dynamics set in motion by the interaction between indigenous and translated books for children are a challenging but rewarding subject, for what they reveal about the target literature and culture. If children's literature continues to be seen as detached from the cultural concerns and social history of specific national contexts, no extensive awareness of the evolution of this literature, as well as its role in the cultural life of the countries that produce it, can be developed.

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